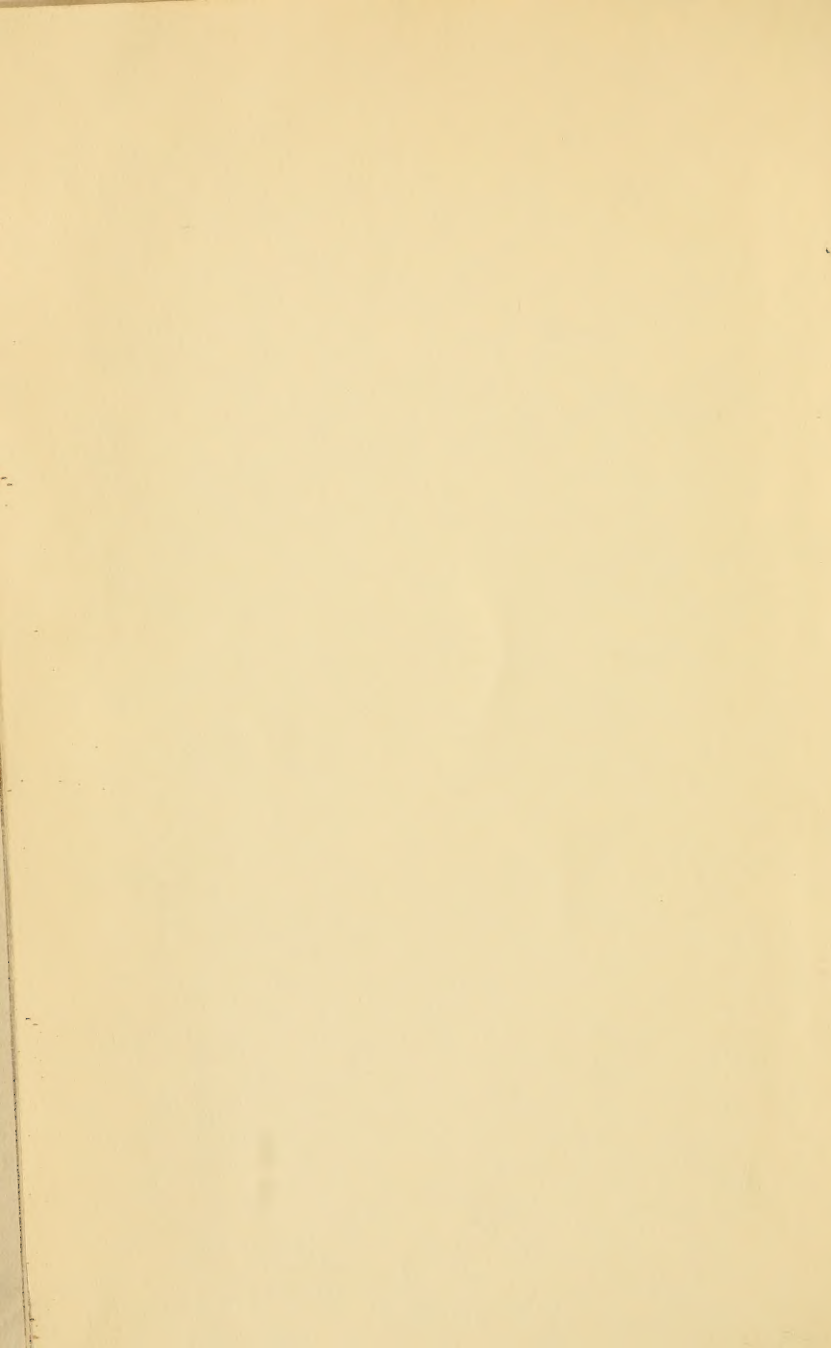
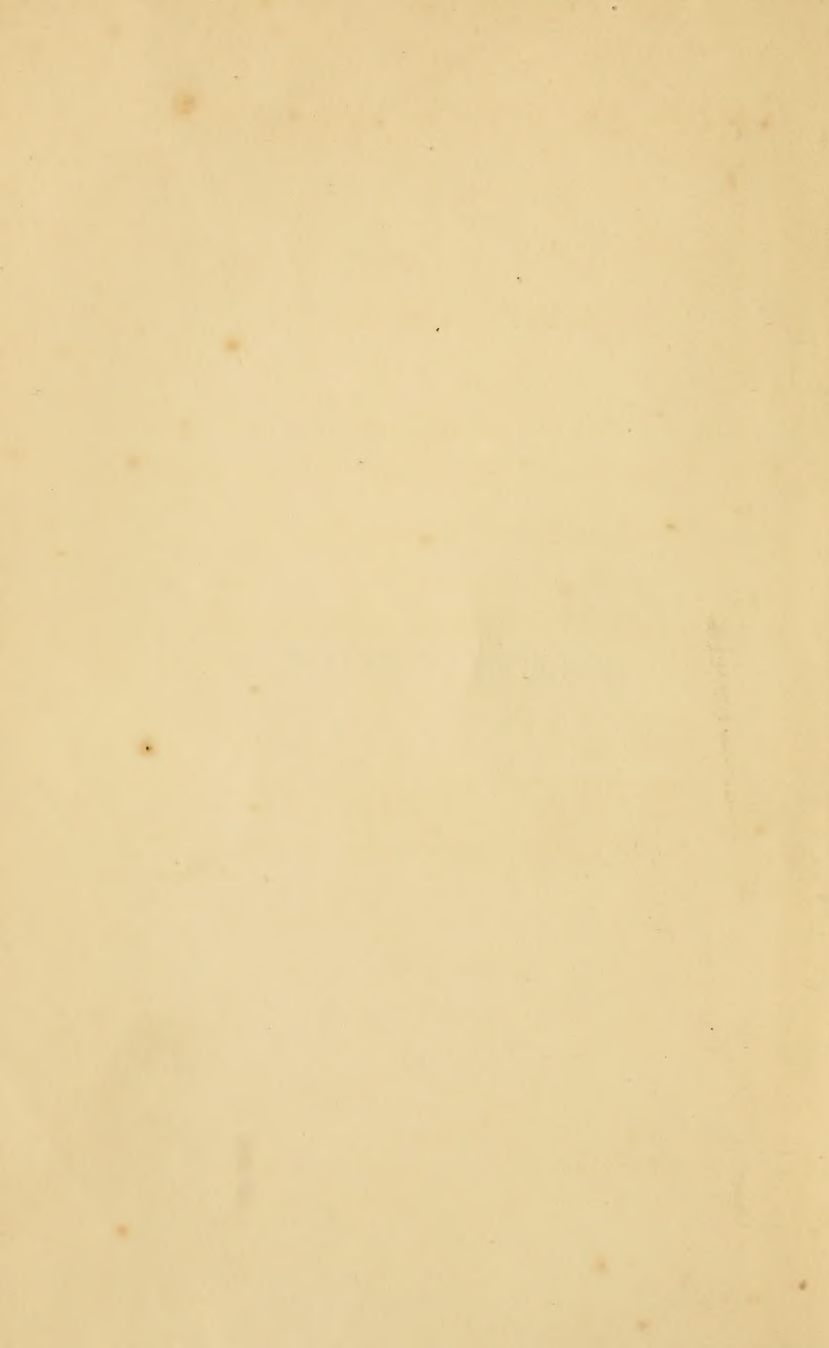


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HORÆ EVANGELICÆ.



HORÆ EVANGELICÆ:


OR,

THE INTERNAL EVIDENCE OF THE GOSPEL HISTORY.

BEING AN INQUIRY INTO THE
STRUCTURE AND ORIGIN OF THE FOUR GOSPELS,
THEIR HISTORICAL CONSISTENCY,
AND THE
CHARACTERISTIC DESIGN OF EACH NARRATIVE.

BY THE REV. T. R. BIRKS, M.A.

RECTOR OF KELSHALL, HERTS;
AND LATE FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

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P R E F A C E.

THE following work has been prepared with a double object in view. It is designed as a contribution to the historical evidence of Christianity; but still more, to throw a fuller light on the mutual relation of the Four Gospels, the special design and origin of each narrative, and their spiritual features as a Divine Revelation.

The "Horæ Paulinæ," that master-piece of Paley, first suggested the idea of such a treatise. In preparing an extensive supplement to it, which has been lately published, with the title, "Horæ Apostolicæ," I was desirous to extend the principle from the Acts and Epistles of St. Paul to the Four Gospels. But a little examination proved that these required a different mode of treatment, to secure any result equally valuable. The principle of Undesigned Coincidence, which Paley so beautifully unfolds, must here be replaced by another, of hardly inferior importance, and which may be called the principle of Reconcilable Variation. To apply it, however, with real success, it was needful to enter fully on those difficult questions, which have been long debated and variously solved, with regard to the origin, the mutual connexion or independence, and the historical harmony, of the Gospel narratives.

The notoriety of Dr. Strauss's work, its wide influence abroad,

and its partial circulation in England, gave a further importance to this inquiry. Several of the answers, by foreign writers, are based on a lax view of the gospels, both in their inspiration and historical accuracy, which happily does not prevail to the same extent among the Christians of our own land. However alien the mythical theory may be from the practical common sense of the British mind, it is never safe for poison to circulate, without some antidote being provided. And since the same line of inquiry, which most effectually refutes this novel form of unbelief, leads also to conclusions of historical interest, and of practical value to the Scripture student, I have thought that the results to which it has led would be an acceptable offering to the Church of Christ in these last days.

The view of the Gospel Harmony, which I have endeavoured to establish, agrees mainly with that of Mr. Greswell, unfolded at length in his valuable Dissertations. No other work, in my opinion, has thrown so full and clear a light on this difficult subject, and I wish to acknowledge my obligation to his learned labours in the strongest terms. At the same time, the order of inquiry pursued in this volume is totally different, even where the general object is the same with his, and where there is only a slight difference in our conclusions. The blemishes which may be found in his work, and especially his grand mistake about the week-day cycle, which vitiates the whole of the Prolegomena, detract but slightly from the general excellence of the Dissertations, as the most valuable contribution, perhaps, ever made, to a correct and clear apprehension of the gospel narrative. The same general results, with some important variations, are reached here in a different order, and by a process of induction from the internal evidence alone.

In the Second Book, the Chronology of the Acts has been investigated anew from the original authorities. The main eras, I conceive, are there settled on conclusive evidence, little short of absolute demonstration. In the following chapters, which investigate the date of the three first gospels from the in-

ternal evidence, the course of argument is mainly original, and embodies the results of a minute inquiry. The conclusion, to which I have thus been led, is, that St. Matthew's gospel was written only twelve or fourteen years after the Ascension ; that of St. Mark, not at Rome, but at Cæsarea, a few years later ; and that of St. Luke, still a few years later, or about A.D. 52, in the neighbourhood of Antioch. If the reasoning is just, it is needless to remark the strong proof, which is thus afforded to the Church, of their Apostolic authority.

The Third Book examines, in detail, the main objections brought by the mythical theorists against the accuracy of the Evangelists ; and shews that these furnish, when examined closely, most powerful evidence for the truth of all the narratives. The last book enters briefly upon a higher subject—the peculiar features, and the distinctive characters of the gospels, viewed as a Divine Revelation. We pass here into a purer region of thought, less troubled with the sounds of unbelieving strife, and where the children of God may catch dim glimpses of the worship of the cherubim, and of the secret glories of their celestial home.

While the treatise was in the press, the work of Da Costa, on the Four Witnesses, was first given to the public. The line of thought has some partial resemblance, and the general conclusions, as to the order of the gospels, their mutual dependence, and their internal signs of authenticity, are the very same. I have enriched the latest chapters of the present work with a few observations, borrowed from this source. The subject is unfolded by that excellent and able writer in a more free and popular, and also in a more eloquent style ; while in this volume the mode of treatment approaches more nearly to the course of a purely scientific inquiry. It has been a deep satisfaction in reading his work, to see that we have been led independently to the same conclusions, in nearly all the points of chief importance, which are included within its narrower range. But, with the highest impression of the ability and excellence of this contribution, by our Jewish brother, to the cause of the gospel,

I do not think that it will supersede the utility of the present volume, which pursues a stricter and more inductive line of comparison, and embraces a wider range of Scriptural inquiry.

May it please Almighty God, the Giver of all wisdom, and the Fountain of all truth, to bless this humble and imperfect effort to vindicate the authority of His own word ; that His children may be enriched with larger supplies of heavenly wisdom, and a new bulwark be reared against the spreading tide of infidelity in these latter days.

Kelshall, December, 1851.

HORÆ EVANGELICÆ :

OR THE

INTERNAL EVIDENCE OF THE GOSPEL HISTORY.

INTRODUCTION.

INFIDELITY has latterly assumed a new form. The vulgar scoffs, or dull criticisms, of earlier adversaries of the gospel, have been largely replaced by the speculations of a Pantheistic philosophy. The idea of Christianity has been treated with nominal respect, that the truth of its great facts may be more successfully denied. The gospels, according to writers of this school, are not real histories, but a collection of early legends, and had their origin in ideal conceptions of the Messiah, which gradually assumed a definite form, and were made to cluster around the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

Such a view of the gospels, to be tenable for a moment, implies that their composition must be referred to a date very considerably removed from the events they profess to record. And hence it is maintained, by the patrons of this new theory, that they were not written until the fall of Jerusalem, or even the close of the first century, and that an interval of sixty or seventy years from the crucifixion is enough to account for the rise of such legends, and their reduction into that definite shape in which the history now appears.

An hypothesis of this extreme kind, however it may startle by its novelty, or dazzle by its boldness, is too unnatural to last. In our own country at least, there is too much instinctive common sense to offer any favourable soil for its propagation. Yet the shew of learning and philosophy, in its chief advocates, may give them, among ourselves, some power to deceive. Even those who reject the theory, as a whole, may not entirely escape its poisonous influence. Admissions respecting errors and inconsistency in the gospels, which abound in the replies of foreign critics to the mythical theory, are perhaps only one degree less dangerous than the system they are used to overthrow. Some of the premises, on which the infidel scheme of explanation pretends to be founded, are received by many of its opponents in Germany as the certain results of critical inquiry. And no doubt, even if the gospels were as imperfect as these writers maintain, the substantial truth of the history would still be clear, and the essentials of Christianity might remain unimpaired. But a closer search will prove how questionable are the claims of this negative criticism. The very parties who reject the plenary inspiration of the gospels, and charge them with anachronism, error, and contradiction, differ in their judgment on almost every particular question on which these charges are founded, and betray continually a looseness of conjecture, and a rashness of hasty inference, which may well destroy all faith in their most confident decisions.

Two of the principles which are very commonly admitted by German critics, are the total irregularity of the gospels, and the late period of their composition; so that the earliest would barely precede the fall of Jerusalem. The interval of time, even on this view, is far too short for the copious introduction of mere legends, and the truth of the facts might be clearly proved, although their real order of succession had been neglected by the historians. Still the tendency of these opinions is to give some partial countenance to the new school of infidelity. Tradition is a very faithless keeper of historical truth. If the life of our

Lord was unwritten for nearly forty years, and the writers, who recorded it, paid no respect to the order of time, their narratives are laid open to many suspicions, and it may seem not very unlikely that facts and legends, to a certain extent, might be confounded together.

The object of the following work is to extend the argument from internal evidence, which Paley has applied with such power to the Acts and St. Paul's Epistles, in connexion with the four Gospel Histories. The nature of the subject, however, requires here a very different mode of development. We have to compare four narratives of the same life, very similar in their structure, in order to detect the causes of their agreement or disagreement, and thereby to establish the genuineness of each narrative, and the substantial truth of the whole history. The relations of the Gospels to each other will first be deduced, by a careful and minute comparison. Their probable dates will then be assigned, by a reference to the Book of Acts, and the history of the early church there given, and to their own features of minute distinction from each other.

The whole subject will be arranged in four parts. The first book will inquire into the mutual relation of the Four Gospels, so as to establish their order of succession, and historical connexion, by the external evidence alone. The result thus obtained will be found to be in entire agreement with the current of early tradition. The second book will investigate the chronology of the Book of Acts, the probable date of the Gospels, and the evidence of their authenticity. The third will inquire into the contradictions alleged to exist between them, and will shew that these constitute, for the most part, a deeper evidence of their common veracity. The fourth and last will enter on a higher field, and briefly treat of the Gospels in their true ideal, as a Divine revelation; with especial reference to their miraculous character, the alleged fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies, and the great and glorious doctrines of the Incarnation, the Atonement and the Resurrection, of the Son of God.

May He, who is the Giver of all wisdom, direct and prosper this attempt to vindicate the authority of His own word, and unfold some of its hidden treasures, that it may minister to the glory of His blessed name, and the good of His Church in these latter days !

BOOK I.

ON THE MUTUAL RELATION OF THE FOUR GOSPELS.

THE usual tradition of early times refers the four gospels to the Apostles Matthew and John, to Mark, the companion of Peter, and Luke, the companion of Paul, as their respective authors. The most general opinion was, that they were written in the order in which they now stand, but Clement has a statement, that the gospels which contain the genealogies were written first. In early, as well as in later times, opinions have varied as to their absolute date. Irenæus seems to refer St. Matthew's Gospel to the time of St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome ; while later writers, Cosmas, Isidore of Seville, and Theophylact, place it only eight or ten years after the Ascension. St. Mark, according to Clement, Epiphanius, Athanasius, and Jerome, published his gospel at Rome, after a visit of St. Peter to that city. St. Luke, according to Gregory Nazianzen and Jerome, published his in Achaia ; while that of St. John, according to Irenæus, was written and published at Ephesus, at the close of Domitian's reign. There is, however, in each instance, some diversity of judgment, even in writers of the four first centuries, with regard to the place and time of their composition.

When we refer to the internal evidence, the three first gospels present very peculiar features, both of resemblance and diversity. In some passages there is a complete and verbal agreement, while they differ considerably in the order of the events, or in minor details of the history. Three explanations have been pro-

posed by modern writers, to account for this peculiar structure. Some affirm them to have been derived from common documents, which the Evangelists merely combined in a different manner, in composing their own works. Others conceive them to have arisen, quite independently of each other, from the oral teaching of the Apostles, which they view as the common source of the narratives, and as sufficient to explain their partial agreement. Others, again, maintain them to be successive, and that each writer was acquainted with the gospels previously written, so as to make use of their contents, besides having access to distinct and original sources of information.

The first of these views prevailed in Germany towards the close of last century, and Bishop Marsh's Dissertation gave it a currency in England. The general opinion, both in Germany and America, has latterly inclined much more to the second view; and the independent origin of the gospels, from oral traditions of the Apostles, has been the favourite theory with critics of eminence. It was held by Drs. Mill and Lardner in the last century, and more recently by Strauss, and the mystical theorists, and by Neander, Olshausen, Tholuck, Norton and Alford, among the critical champions of historical Christianity. All of them seem to agree that the three earlier gospels are irregular and fragmentary memoirs, and partially inaccurate, though substantially true; and that they were composed separately from the oral statements of the Apostles, about thirty or forty years after the date of the crucifixion.

The third opinion, which was prevalent among the Fathers, has also its advocates in modern times. In our own country, Dr. Townson in the last century, and Mr. Greswell in the present, have maintained it with much force of argument. Use will be made of their labours in the following work, but it will be endeavoured to confirm the explanation of the gospels, thus offered, by a strictly inductive and comprehensive inquiry. For this end it will be needful, first, to compare St. Matthew and St. Mark, then St. Luke with both of them; and, lastly, the gospel of St. John with all the three earlier narratives.

To facilitate the comparison, it is desirable to begin with exhibiting a numbered syllabus of the three first gospels, in the part which is common to them all, or from the Baptism of John to the resurrection. The gospel of St. Mark, as the shortest, will be taken for the basis, and the numbers borrowed from it are applied to the answering portions in the others; while the parts peculiar to St. Matthew will be denoted by *Italic*, and those in St. Luke, by Greek letters, in the order of their occurrence.

ST. MARK.

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|----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Baptism of John | 34. Woman of Canaan | 63. Warning against the |
| 2. His Preaching | 35. Deaf man cured | Scribes and Pharisees. |
| 3. Baptism of Jesus | 36. Four thousand | 64. Widow's mite |
| 4. The Temptation | 37. Leaven of Pharisees | 65. Prophecy on the Mount |
| 5. Return to Galilee | 38. Blind man healed | 66. Anointing in Bethany |
| 6. Call of Four Apostles | 39. Peter's confession | 67. Treachery of Judas |
| 7. Dispossession | 40. Transfiguration | 68. Passover prepared |
| 8. Simon's wife's mother | 41. Cure of child | 69. Warning to Judas |
| 9. Cures at even | 42. Journey through Ga- | 70. Lord's Supper |
| 10. Departure | lilee | 71. Warning to Peter |
| 11. Circuit of Galilee | 43. Dispute of Apostles | 72. The Agony |
| 12. Cure of Leper | 44. John's inquiry | 73. The Apprehension |
| 13. Paralytic | 45. Warning against of- | 74. Malchus |
| 14. Call of Levi | fences | 75. The Young Man |
| 15. Feast with Publicans | 46. Divorce | 76. Jesus before high-priest |
| 16. Corn-fields | 47. Young children | 77. Jesus mocked |
| 17. Withered Hand | 48. Young rich man | 78. Peter's denial |
| 18. Retirement to the Sea | 49. Prediction of sufferings | 79. Jesus and Pilate |
| 19. Ordination of Apostles | 50. The sons of Zebedee | 80. Barabbas |
| 20. Resort of Multitudes | 51. Lesson of humility | 81. Jesus mocked |
| 21. Discourse on Blasphemy | 52. Cure of blind man at | 82. Crucifixion |
| 22. Visit of his Mother | Jericho | 83. Scoffs and revilings |
| 23. Parables of Sower, &c. | 53. The ass's colt | 84. The Darkness |
| 24. Tempest stilled | 54. Curse on the fig-tree | 85. Death of Jesus |
| 25. Demoniacs of Gadara | 55. Cleansing of the temple | 86. Women at the cross |
| 26. Ruler's daughter | 56. Fig-tree withered | 87. Joseph of Arimathea |
| 27. Visit to Nazareth | 57. Question of authority | 88. Women at the tomb |
| 28. Mission of the Twelve | 58. The Vineyard | 89. Mary Magdalene |
| 29. The Baptist's death | 59. The Tribute Money | 90. The Two Disciples |
| 30. Twelve return | 60. The Sadducees | 91. The Eleven |
| 31. Five thousand fed | 61. The great command- | 92. Last Commission |
| 32. Walking on the Sea | ment | 93. Ascension |
| 33. Scribes and Pharisees | 62. Christ, David's Son | |

ST. MATTHEW.

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|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1—6. Matt. iii. 1—iv. 22 | 27. Visit to Nazareth | <i>o.</i> Parable of Wedding |
| 11. Circuit of Galilee | 29—32. Matt. xiv | 59—62. xxii. 15—46 |
| <i>A.</i> Sermon on Mount | 33, 34. Matt. xv. 1—28 | 63. Warning against Pharisees |
| 12. Cure of Leper | 36. Four Thousand | 65. Prophecy on Mount |
| <i>b.</i> Centurion's servant | 37. Leaven of Pharisees | <i>p.</i> Parables, Matt. xxv |
| 8, 9. Matt. viii. 14—17 | 39—42. Matt. xvi. 13 ; | 66—74. Matt. xxvi. 1—56 |
| <i>c.</i> Answer to disciples | xvii. 23 | 76—78. Matt. xxvi. 57—75 |
| 24, 25. Matt. viii. 23 ; ix. 1 | <i>i.</i> Tribute money | <i>q.</i> Repentance of Judas |
| 13—15. Matt. ix. 2—17 | 43. Dispute of Apostles | 79, 80. Matt. xxvii. 11—18 |
| 26. Ruler's daughter | 45. Warning against offences | <i>r.</i> Pilate's wife |
| <i>d, e, f.</i> Matt. ix. 27—38 | <i>k, l, m.</i> Matt. xviii. 10—35 | 81—87. xxvii. 27—61 |
| 28. Mission of Twelve | 46—48. Matt. xix | <i>s.</i> The Watch |
| <i>g.</i> Message of John | <i>n.</i> Parable of Labourers | 88. Women |
| <i>h.</i> Warning, xi. 20—30 | 49—52. Matt. xx. 17—34 | <i>t.</i> Appearance of Jesus |
| 16—18. Matt. xii. 1—21 | 53, 55, 54. xxi. 1—22 | <i>u.</i> Report of Watch |
| 21, 22. Matt. xii. 22—f | 56—58. xxi. 23—46 | <i>v.</i> Galilee. |
| 23. Parables | | |

ST. LUKE.

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|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1, 2. The Baptist | 47—49. Luke xviii. 15—34 | 78. Peter's denial |
| <i>a.</i> His Imprisonment | 52. Cure of Blind Man | 77. Jesus mocked |
| 3. Baptism of Jesus | <i>μ.</i> Zaccheus | <i>π.</i> Jesus before council |
| <i>β.</i> Genealogy | <i>ν.</i> Parable of Talents | 79. Jesus and Pilate |
| 4, 5. Luke iv. 1—15 | 53. Entrance to Jerusalem | <i>p.</i> Jesus and Herod |
| <i>γ.</i> Visit to Nazareth | <i>ξ.</i> Lamentation | 80. Barabbas |
| 7—11. Luke iv. 33—44 | 55. Cleansing of Temple | <i>σ.</i> Discourse to Women |
| <i>δ.</i> Miraculous Draught | 57—60. Luke xx. 1—40 | 82, 83. |
| 12—17. Luke v. 12 ; vi. 11 | 62—64. Luke xx. 41 ; | <i>τ.</i> Penitent Thief |
| 19. Ordination | xxi. 4 | 84—87. xxiii. 44—56 |
| <i>ε—κ.</i> Luke vi. 20 ; viii. 4 | 65. Prophecy on Mount | 88 Women at Tomb |
| 23. Parables | 67. Treachery of Judas | <i>υ.</i> Peter at Tomb |
| 22. Visit of Mother | 68. Preparation | 90. Two Disciples |
| 24—26. Luke viii. 22—f | 70. Lord's Supper | 91. Eleven |
| 28—31. Luke ix. 1—17 | 69. Warning to Judas | 92. Last Commission |
| 39—44. Luke ix. 18—50 | <i>ο.</i> Dispute of greatness | 93. Ascension |
| <i>Λ.</i> Luke ix. 51 ; xviii. 14 | 71—74. Luke xxii. 31—53 | |

CHAPTER I.

ON THE RELATION OF ST. MATTHEW AND ST. MARK'S GOSPELS.

THERE are four main particulars, in which the gospels may be compared together, in order to illustrate their origin by internal presumptions. These are, the selection of events, the order of arrangement, the historical details, and the distinctive features of phraseology and style.

In such a comparison, each of the three hypotheses, before mentioned, will naturally yield a different result. The gospels, if they arose out of common documents, variously combined, might differ greatly in the selection and arrangement of the events; but the details and phraseology, wherever the same event was recorded, would be the same. If they arose independently from oral tradition, not only the selection and arrangement, but still more the details and the phraseology, would be almost certain to differ widely. On the other hand, if each writer had access to the previous gospels, and made use of this knowledge in composing his own work, so important an element in their structure could hardly fail to reveal itself, either by a close resemblance, where the incidents recorded are the same, or by a supplementary relation to each other, when they differ; and this character will be more apparent, with every fresh narrative that we include in the inquiry.

Let us begin with the gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark,

the two first in order in the actual arrangement, and the two which bear the closest resemblance to each other. Their contents, from the baptism of John, are expressed by the two numbered lists, just given; and the letters denote those portions of the first, which are wanting in the second gospel.

It appears, by this comparison, that of 99 portions in St. Matthew, and 93 in St. Mark, about 78 are common to both, or in number, just four-fifths of the whole. Also, that of 65 particulars in St. Mark, 29—93, fifty-five appear in the other gospel, with one single variation only, in the same relative order. This deviation is found in the cursing of the fig-tree, which St. Mark mentions before, and St. Matthew after, the cleansing of the temple.

In the presence of this simple fact, it is surprising how modern critics could ever assert that the gospels are alike unchronological in their structure, and independent in their origin. Two writers, unacquainted with each other, may agree in the order of their narratives, if each adheres to the true succession of events; or their arrangement may be the same, while different from the true order, if one has borrowed from the other. But if they write independently, from loose traditions, and neglect the real order of time, such a close agreement, without a miracle, seems incredible. And yet many critics have fallen into this great inconsistency; and offer, as the ripest result of learned inquiry, an hypothesis which leaves the most prominent feature in the mutual relation of the gospels entirely unexplained.

Since, however, this view of the gospels, as irregular and independent, is held by eminent writers, let us test it more closely. The ministry of our Lord lasted, we infer from the New Testament, about three years. It is a moderate estimate, that each day of such a life would produce one event, whether miracle, discourse, or journey, worthy in the abstract of a distinct notice. Of these thousand particulars, if each apostle retained a hundred in his oral teaching, it would be probable that more than 700 would be retained in the collective tradition. Or if there

were fifty events so prominent, as to be preserved by all the Apostles, still the total number, in case of an independent choice for the rest, would amount to 400. Two gospels, framed from such traditions alone, could never exhibit the agreement which actually appears between those of St. Matthew and St. Mark, unless the tradition were confined to one or two eye-witnesses. But this limitation changes the very nature of the hypothesis; since an oral tradition, as full in its contents and definite in arrangement as a written document, would be thus assumed for the common basis of the two gospels. The hypothesis of oral tradition, in its simple and natural form, can never explain the actual correspondence between them.

Let us now test the other hypothesis, of a common document, transcribed by both writers, with varying interpolations. It may be supposed that there was a primitive gospel, which contained the seventy particulars, common to both, in their actual order; and that the rest was added, either from other documents, or from general tradition. In this case, however, the parts transcribed from the common source would be almost verbally the same. If a latitude of alteration be supposed, the hypothesis falls to the ground; since no common document can be required to account for the existence of two accounts of the same event, different both in language and in details. The only presumption for a common derivation from such a written source, would be a resemblance in these borrowed portions hardly differing from complete identity.

Now in the gospels this feature is almost entirely wanting. The same events are recorded in more than seventy cases, but the phraseology, and the choice of details, in most of these, are very distinct. The differences are not such as could be explained by the further hypothesis of two translations from the same Hebrew original. Thus, for instance, in No. 34, the account of the Syrophenician has only one clause, out of fourteen, where there is an approach to identity, and the details and arrangement are quite different.

The notion of two extracts or transcripts from the same ori-

ginal document is here quite untenable. And since the remark applies to a large proportion of those particulars, where the main event is the same, the hypothesis of a primitive document from which these two gospels might both have been derived, fails entirely to account for their agreement.

But the same facts are equally adverse to the opinion, held by so many recent critics, that the evangelists pay little or no regard to the true order of time. When fifty or sixty distinct events are recorded by two writers in the very same order, the only reasonable explanation must be in one of two alternatives. Each of them must have adhered to the order of time, or one of them has followed the other's arrangement. If we confine our view to the later portions, No. 29—93, Matt. xiv.—xxviii, Mark vi. 14; xvi, either view would account for the agreement. But since the order is different in the previous chapters, it is plain that one writer has not adopted implicitly the other's arrangement, and hence their agreement in the later portion is a strong presumption, if not an absolute proof, that both of them have there adhered to the true order of succession in the events themselves.

II. This question of arrangement is the next subject for comparison. Here, in the earlier chapters, there is a serious discordance, which will be seen if we distinguish the successive parts of St. Matthew by the numbers borrowed from St. Mark's Gospel. The series runs as follows:—1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, A, 12, b, 8, 9, c, 24, 25, 13, 14, 15, 26, d, e, f, 28, g, h, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 27, 39. Either both narratives are irregular, or one has observed, and the other has departed from, the real succession. On the former view it is difficult to explain the sameness of order in the rest of the narrative. Why should both neglect it up to the same point, and then begin to adhere to it together? It is far simpler and more natural to suppose that one of them has transposed the events in a limited part of the history, and restored the true order elsewhere; and that the other has rectified this partial transposition.

In which of the gospels, then, has the true order been observed? The most natural test will be, a comparison with a third gospel, that of St. Luke, in the same portion of the narrative. The sequence will there be as follows, where the numbers denote the order in St. Mark, and the Greek letters the portions found in St. Luke only.

1, 2, α, 3, β, 4, 5, γ, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, δ, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, ε-κ, 23, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30.

It is plain that, although several insertions are made, the order is the same in both, with one slight exception, in the visit of the mother of Jesus, No. 22. If the call of the disciples, No. 6, be identified with the Miraculous Draught, δ, this would prove a second inversion. But in 22 or 23 out of 24 instances, the agreement is complete. There is thus a most weighty presumption that St. Mark has observed the true order, and St. Matthew in part forsaken it. The agreement of St. Mark and St. Luke in this portion, as of St. Matthew and St. Mark in the other, implies that one has copied the other's arrangement, or that both have adhered to the real sequence. But if St. Luke had access to St. Mark's Gospel, he would probably have access also to that of St. Matthew, and there seems no reason why he should prefer one order to the other, except his conviction that it was more agreeable to the actual order of the history. This conclusion from the evidence of the third gospel is confirmed by the words of its preface, where the writer apparently states his intention of adhering to the order of the events themselves.

This explanation, however, is still imperfect, unless a sufficient reason can be suggested for the irregularity in St. Matthew. But such a reason presents itself at once in the structure of his gospel. The irregular portion, on this view, is chap. v—xiii. inclusive. Two thirds of the whole consists of discourses of our Lord, and less than one-third is direct narrative. The writer brings prominently forward the Sermon on the Mount, and the Apostolic commission, or the fundamental code of Christian morality, and the great charter of the Christian ministry. It

can neither be surprising nor unusual, therefore, if, like other historians, he has partially sacrificed the order of time to secure a more important object. At chapter xiv. simple narrative begins to predominate, and from this point the order is the same in both gospels. St. Mark has omitted those two long discourses, and has reported the parables more briefly than St. Matthew, while the narrative is given with fuller details. The first part of his gospel is thus homogeneous in character with the rest ; and hence it would be natural for him to rectify any transpositions of St. Matthew, since the occasion of them was entirely removed.

A more detailed examination will confirm the view, that the second gospel has restored the true order of time, where the first had departed from it. The agreement in No. 1—6 is complete, for here no discourse intervenes to occasion irregularity. But the writer of the first gospel, hastening to record the sermon, which is one of its main features, has passed over four particulars, which appear in St. Mark, and comes at once to the general circuit of Galilee. The cure of the leper has the same position in both, after that circuit. The healing of the Centurion's servant is not found in the second gospel. Hence the cures in Simon's house, Nos. 8, 9 are the first positive divergence. And it seems clear that St. Mark has restored these to their true place. He marks the day when they occurred, the first Sabbath of our Lord's public teaching in Capernaum after the call of Simon, and when the demoniac had just been publicly healed. He notes equally the events that followed the evening cures, namely, the retirement of Jesus for prayer, before it was day, and the eager search made for him by Simon. In the first gospel, on the contrary, there is no necessary connection between these cures and the events which are mentioned before and after them, the healing of the centurion's servant, and the voyage across the lake of Tiberias. In their first deviation, it is thus plain that St. Mark has rectified a transposition in the first gospel.

The voyage itself is the next divergence, since it is placed much later in St. Mark than the cures at Capernaum on the

Sabbath evening. Now, just as he has precisely fixed the place of those cures, by the events which precede and follow them, he has done the same with the voyage. After his mention of the teaching in parables, he has added, with unusual precision, (Mark iv. 35.) "And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side." The note of time is so express, as to favour the supposition that the writer intended to fix the true order of an event, which had been much transposed in the earlier gospel. The link is hardly less definite in the return from the voyage, Mark v. 21, 22. "And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people was gathered unto him, and he was nigh unto the sea. And behold there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name, and he fell at his feet, and besought him greatly."

The next deviation in St. Matthew, compared with the two other gospels, is in the cure of the paralytic. Accordingly its place is fixed by St. Mark in very definite language, immediately after an absence from Capernaum, which had lasted many days, and during which our Lord had continued to seek retirement in desert places. The same attention to the order of time appears in the Ordination and Mission of the Twelve, which the first gospel has not distinguished, but which appear in St. Mark at a considerable interval, Mark iii. 14—19. vi. 7—13, in agreement with internal probability, and with the testimony of the third gospel.

There are many signs, again, in these chapters of St. Matthew, that a different object is kept in view than the mere sequence of the events. After the call of the disciples, the writer proceeds at once to the Sermon on the Mount, and for this purpose a whole circuit of Galilee, with a multitude of cures and dispossessions, is briefly summed up in two verses. After the sermon, and a selection of particular miracles, the writer again hastens to the mission of the Apostles, and entirely overlooks their ordination, to which he merely alludes as a notorious fact, which had occurred before. The events Matt. viii. 2, 5, 14, 18, have no

formal links of connexion in the narrative. They might be merely selected specimens of our Lord's miracles, without reference to strict sequence in time. They present a moral gradation, from the personal supplication of the leper, through the vicarious requests of the centurion and of Peter, to the sullen adjuration of the demoniacs of Gadara, refusing and resisting the mercy which they received. It may be inferred, also, from a comparison of the gospels, that the mission of the Twelve did not occur till near the Baptist's death, a little before the third Passover, in the later half of our Lord's ministry. Yet here it is preceded by only three chapters of narrative, while eight others follow it, before the last visit to Jerusalem. It seems clear, then, that the writer has hastened over the previous interval, because he intended that the discourse, of such importance to the Church, should have an early and conspicuous place in his gospel.

There is another circumstance which strongly confirms the view here maintained. If a writer deviates from the order of time for special reasons, in an early part of his narrative, and then resumes it, there will naturally be a portion which has an intermediate character. Events will have to be given, which had been omitted in their true place, from the designed anticipation of others; and these will be irregular, when compared with what precedes, but regular, when compared with all that follows. Now, on the present view, this very feature appears in St. Matthew's gospel. The twelfth and thirteenth chapters are irregular, compared with those which precede them, and regular when compared with those which come after. This will be seen at once by giving the numbers in Matt. viii—xiv. as below:—

12, b, 8, 9, c, 24, 25, 13. 14, 15, 26, d, e, f, 28, g, h.

16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 27,

29, 30, 31, 32, 33.

Here the numbers 16—27 are regular as regards all those which follow, but irregular with reference to numbers 24, 25, 26, 28, which have come before them. The cause is thus precisely adequate to the effects, and minutely explains them.

There are two reasons, however, which may be urged in opposition to this view of the real order. The first is the character of St. Matthew as an Apostle and eye-witness, whose testimony may therefore claim a superior weight to the other two writers. But there is no reason to think that an eye-witness would be more likely, than a diligent investigator, to adhere to the exact order of the events themselves. The relation of time has nearly the same weight for all persons; but place, circumstance, and external associations, are more vivid with an eye-witness than with others, and more likely to divert the mind from the relation of mere sequence alone. The house of Matthew was probably near to the sea, and to the place where he received the tribute. Hence it is likely that the request of Jairus would be made in the same place, where the discourse on fasting had been spoken; and an association of circumstance and place might be a substitute, in the mind of the writer, for direct and immediate succession.

The other difficulty is, at first sight, more serious, as an objection to the regularity of the second gospel. The words of Mat. ix. 18. "While he spake these things, there came a certain ruler," seem to establish a close connection between the discourse on fasting, and the cure of the ruler's daughter, numbers 15, 26, which are widely separated both by St. Mark and St. Luke. Three or four solutions of this contrast have been proposed. First, that the discourse is anticipated in these gospels, or placed too early. But all the three writers make the events successive, and apparently continuous, from the curing of the paralytic to the close of the discourse. And hence, if we attach the feast in all of them to the history of Jairus, we leave the hiatus undiminished in St. Matthew, introduce a great irregularity into the two other gospels, and separate events, which all of them place together in the same order.

Dr. Townson, again, thinks the cure of the ruler's daughter post-dated in the two other gospels, and that St. Mark preferred affinity of subject to the order of time. When the course of events has brought him again to the place where Jairus lived, he

reverts to mention the miracle in his house, though it had been wrought before. But the scene had returned to Capernaum much earlier, Mark iii. 9, or iii. 19. Also two difficulties are made in removing one; for in all the gospels this cure follows the dispossession in Gadara, and our Lord's return to the other side. The event is also clearly linked by St. Mark with the visit to Nazareth.

Besides these explanations, which assume St. Mark to be irregular, Mr. Greswell, who holds his gospel to be strictly regular, offers another, and views the feast and discourse in St. Matthew as distinct from the one recorded by the two other evangelists. This hypothesis, it can scarcely be denied, is harsh and violent. The accounts in Mark and Luke differ as much from each other as either of them from that of St. Matthew, and the agreement in all three is unusually close and full. Though St. Luke alone says explicitly that the feast was in the house of the publican, this is implied in the two other gospels. On the view of the Dissertations, that the gospels are supplementary, the objection to this hypothesis is still more decisive. If the two later evangelists have substituted an earlier feast and discourse for the one in Matthew, from their exact likeness to each other, they would have constructed a perplexing enigma, for which no conceivable motive can be assigned.

The whole difficulty will be at once removed, if the clause in St. Matthew, "while he spake these things," admits of a wider and less exact meaning, than at first sight it seems to convey. If the connexion in time was only apparent, and an interval of a few months really separated the feast from the cure, it would be quite natural for the later gospels to restore the true order, and to fix the place of each event in its real context.

One example in St. Matthew, of this looser construction, is found in the very same verse, ix. 18. He thus reports the address of the ruler, "My daughter is even now dead; but come and lay thine hand upon her, and she shall live." Yet the other Evangelists shew us, that his real request was for her recovery from a mortal sickness, (Mark v. 43. Luke viii. 41, 42.), and that the news of her death only came after the cure of the

woman with the issue. St. Matthew, then, has plainly used considerable latitude of expression in this latter clause of the verse. It must be allowable to use the like freedom, in explaining the true sense of its opening words.

The eighth and ninth chapters of this gospel are only a brief selection out of the events of nearly a year and half, in which every day must have been busily employed. The former exhibits a brief series of simple miracles. The cure of the Paralytic introduces doctrinal statements, that reveal the grace and compassion of Jesus. It might be the design of the Evangelist to mark the connexion between striking declarations, and equally impressive acts of grace. It was while Jesus was uttering gracious declarations, like those of which specimens have just been given, that the ruler applied to him, and the doctrine was sealed by a still more splendid miracle of Divine power and love. The whole passage, ix. 2—17, will thus be viewed as a parenthesis, designed to illustrate the gracious and compassionate tone of our Saviour's teaching. The return from Gadara to Capernaum would be a fit occasion for introducing these earlier incidents, which took place in or near the city; and the account is then resumed from the time of that return, by the request of Jairus, and hastens onward to the public mission of the Twelve Apostles.

We have only to suppose, then, that our Lord was uttering similar words of love on his return from Gadara, as at the feast in Matthew's house, and that the reference is not to the particular sentence, in Matt. ix. 17, but to the whole tenor of his teaching, and the difficulty will be removed. A sufficient explanation will be thus given of the clause itself, and a clear reason why the other gospels should restore each event to its proper place in the history.

A close enquiry has thus led to the following results. The first and second gospels, in all the latter part, agree in their arrangement, with scarcely one exception in nearly sixty particulars. Hence either one has borrowed the order of the other,

or both have followed the order of time. But that one has borrowed his arrangement from the other is very improbable, because the order is different in their earlier portion. Hence it is almost certain that both of them, in No. 29—93, adhere to the real succession of the history. Their difference, in the other part, is most naturally accounted for by the supposition, that the earlier departed here from the true order, and the later has restored it. But the order of St. Mark is entirely confirmed by that of St. Luke, and therefore is probably the actual order, for the same reason as before. Also there is a sufficient reason for the irregularity of St. Matthew in this portion, because one third of it only is narrative, and the strict succession might be departed from, to give greater prominence to the Sermon on the Mount, and the Apostolic Commission. The details of the comparison fully confirm this view ; and the only difficulty of real weight in the opposite scale is removed by due attention to the style and scope of the first Evangelist, and the rapid transition which he here makes from the beginning to the later part of our Lord's ministry.

III. The third subject for comparison is the historical details of each event. Two gospels, merely compiled from a common document, would record the same event in almost the very same words. On the other hand, if they were formed independently from loose traditions, a close verbal resemblance could rarely exist between them. If one were later than the other, and the second writer knew the work of the first, and had also original materials of his own, the results would be of an intermediate kind. He might sometimes adopt the earlier narrative, almost without a change, sometimes he might interweave partial additions, while in other cases the whole structure of the second narrative might be original and independent. Hence repeated examples of close verbal resemblance between two gospels will exclude the hypothesis of their origin from oral tradition alone ; great divergence in their accounts of the same event will equally forbid an explanation by a common document ; and both features,

when combined, will become a powerful evidence for the successive origin of the gospels, their mutual dependence, and their separate authority.

The first instance of close resemblance is in the account of the Baptist.

MATTHEW iii. 4—6. And the same John had his clothing of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

MARK i. 5, 6. And John was clothed with camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins, and did eat locusts and wild honey.

And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

The two verses occur in an opposite order, and contain a few slight variations. Yet still the general agreement is so close, that it is hard to account for it, if the gospels were entirely independent.

The resemblance in the call of the disciples is still more striking.

MATTHEW iv. 18. And walking beside the sea of Galilee, he saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers.

And he saith unto them, Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.

And they straightway forsook their nets, and followed him.

And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the ship, with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. And he called them. And they straightway left the ship and their father, and followed him.

MARK i. 16—20. And walking beside the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon, and Andrew the brother of Simon, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers.

And Jesus said unto them, Come after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

And they straightway forsook their nets, and followed him.

And going on from thence, a little further, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, themselves also in the ship, mending their nets. And straightway he called them. And they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

Here also there are a few slight alterations, but the arrange-

ment of the particulars, and even the phraseology, is in general the very same. A briefer instance follows, in the description of our Lord's teaching.

MATTHEW vii. 28, 29. The multitudes were astonished at his doctrine; for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes.

MARK i. 22. And they were astonished at his doctrine; for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes.

The resemblance in the account of the feast is equally close.

MATTHEW ix. 10—13. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and his disciples.

And the Pharisees, when they saw it, said to his disciples,

Why eateth your master with publicans and sinners?

But when Jesus heard it, he said unto them,

They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice:

For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

MARK ii. 15—17. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners also sat down with Jesus and his disciples; for there were many, and they followed him.

And the Scribes and Pharisees, when they saw him eating with publicans and sinners, said to his disciples,

Why is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

And when Jesus heard it, he saith unto them,

They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick:

I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

The account of the miracle of the loaves, with its sequel, amidst more numerous variations, presents another example of extensive verbal agreement.

MATTHEW xiv. 13—27. And when Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart, and when the people heard, they followed him on foot out of the cities.

MARK vi. 32—50. And they departed into a desert place by ship apart. And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran on foot thither out of all the cities, and out-went them, and came together unto him.

And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion towards them, and he healed their sick.

And when it was evening, his disciples came to him saying, This is a desert place, and the hour is now past: send away the multitude, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves victuals.

But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat.

And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves and two fishes. And he said, Bring them hither to me.

And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass.

And he took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

And they did all eat, and were filled, and they took up the fragments that remained, twelve baskets full.

And they that did eat were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

And straightway he constrained his disciples to enter into the ship, and to go before him to the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

And when he had sent away the multitudes, he went up into the mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone, but the ship was already in the midst of the sea.

And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd, and he began to teach them many things.

And when a late hour was now come, his disciples came to him and said, This is a desert place, and it is now a late hour: send them away, that they may go into the fields and villages round about, and buy themselves loaves; for they have nothing to eat.

But he answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat.

And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred penny worth of bread and give them to eat? He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies on the green grass. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds and by fifties.

And he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave to the disciples to set before them, and the two fishes he divided among all.

And they did all eat and were filled, and they took up of fragments twelve baskets full, and of the fishes.

And they that did eat the loaves were about five thousand men.

And straightway he constrained his disciples to enter into the ship, and to go before him to the other side to Bethsaida, while he sent the multitude away.

And when he had sent them away, he departed into the mountain to pray: and when the evening was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.

Another very exact coincidence occurs in the dispute of the ten with the sons of Zebedee.

MATTHEW xx. 24—28.

And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.

But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that they which rule over the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

But it shall not be so among you ; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.

Even as the Son of man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

MARK x. 41—45.

And when the ten heard it, they began to be moved with indignation against James and John.

But Jesus called them unto him, and said to them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they of them that are great exercise authority upon them.

But it shall not be so among you ; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, shall be servant of all.

For even the Son of man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

In the parable of the sower, the resemblance is very nearly as complete.

MATTHEW xii. 1—9.

The same day went Jesus out of the house and sat by the sea side.

And great multitudes were gathered together to him, so that he went into the ship, and sat, and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

And he spoke to them many things in parables, saying,

Behold, a sower went forth to sow :

And when he sowed, some fell by the way-side and the fowls came, and devoured them up.

And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth ; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no deepness of earth :

MARK iv. 1—9.

And he began to teach by the sea-side, and a great multitude was gathered together to him, so that he went into the ship, and out in the sea ; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.

And he taught them many things in parables, and said unto them in his doctrine, Hearken,

Behold, a sower went forth to sow.

And it came to pass, when he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls came, and devoured it up.

And some fell on stony ground where it had not much earth ; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no deepness of earth :

And when the sun was risen, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprung up, and choked them.

But others fell on good ground, and did yield fruit, some a hundred, some twenty, some thirty.

Whoso hath an ear to hear, let him hear.

And when the sun was risen, it was scorched, and because it had no root, it withered away.

And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprung up and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit, springing up, and increasing; and yielded, some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred.

And he said unto them,

Whoso hath an ear to hear, let him hear.

Here only a few slight changes are made. Where St. Matthew uses the plural, St. Mark uses the singular, in speaking of the seed, and conversely; while in v. 8 the order is inverted. These changes, and a comparison with St. Luke, prove that a close verbal agreement was not at all essential to a faithful report of the parable. And hence it follows, that one writer must have been partly guided by the other, or else both by a common prototype.

In the account of the question respecting our Lord's authority, there is rather more variation; but still, in the main, there is a minute and verbal agreement.

MATTHEW xxi. 23—27.

And when he was come into the temple, there came to him, as he taught, the chief priests and the elders of the people, saying,

By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

And Jesus answered and said to them, I also will ask you one word, which if ye tell me, I also will tell you by what authority I do these things.

The baptism of John, whence was it? of heaven, or of men?

And they reasoned among themselves,

MARK xi. 27—33.

And as he was walking in the temple, there came unto him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders, and say unto him,

By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority, to do these things?

And Jesus answered and said to them, I also will ask you (in return) one word, and do ye answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

The baptism of John, was it of heaven, or of men? answer me.

And they reasoned among themselves,

saying, If we say, From heaven, he will say to us, Why then did ye not believe him?

But if we say, Of men; we fear the people; for all account John as a prophet.

And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell.

And he also said to them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

saying, If we say, From heaven, he will say, Why then did ye not believe him?

But if we say, Of men, they feared the people; for all accounted John, that he was indeed a prophet.

And they answered and said to Jesus, We cannot tell.

And Jesus answering saith to them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

Another instance of the same, or a still closer resemblance, occurs in the double report of the parable of the fig-tree, in the Prophecy on the Mount.

MATTHEW xxiv. 32—35.

Now learn its parable from the fig-tree: When its branch already becomes tender, and the leaves put forth, ye know that the summer is nigh.

So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that *he* is near, *even* at the doors.

Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, until all these things be done.

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

MARK xiii. 28—31.

Now learn its parable from the fig-tree: When its branch already becomes tender, and the leaves put forth, ye know that the summer is nigh.

So likewise ye, when ye shall see these things coming to pass, know that *he* is near, *even* at the doors.

Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, until all these things be done.

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

But of that day, or hour, knoweth no man, no, not the angels that are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

These examples, to which others might be added, are enough to prove that the two gospels could not have been formed independently, and from oral tradition alone. Such a minute agreement, even in the phraseology, and throughout many successive verses, would on this view be inexplicable.

The instances, however, of partial or total divergence, where the same events are narrated, are still more numerous, and disprove, with equal force, the hypothesis of the gospels being

derived from some common document. Let us notice a few passages in the order of their occurrence.

The account of our Lord's baptism differs almost entirely in the details. The conversation is omitted; the dramatic form is exchanged for the historical, the word *σχιζομενους* is substituted for *ανεωχθησαν*, and the voice itself is not given in the same words,

The account of the temptation is still more varied. St. Mark, who often enlarges, here contracts the narrative to a single verse; while mention is made, here only, of the wild beasts, and only one clause resembles the other gospel.

The opening of our Lord's ministry is very differently given. The formal transfer of its scene to Capernaum from Nazareth is not mentioned. The prophecy of Isaiah is passed over in silence, while the brief passage, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," is considerably enlarged and modified. "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand—Repent, and believe the gospel."

The account of the cure in the synagogue is an addition, since no mention of it occurs in St. Matthew's gospel; and even the cure of Simon's wife's mother, which follows, is given with fresh circumstances, and a considerable variation in the phrase. The cures of the leper and the paralytic, while one or two clauses are retained, are also given with fuller detail, and with several important alterations in the words of the description. A collation of the two accounts, in this last instance, will shew how few of the clauses retain a verbal correspondence.

MATTHEW ix. 2—8.

And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, laid upon a bed.

MARK ii. 3—12.

And they came unto him, bringing a paralytic, who was borne by four men.

And when they could not come nigh to him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where he was; and when they had broken it up, they let down the couch wherein the paralytic lay.

And when Jesus saw their faith, he

But when Jesus saw their faith, he

said to the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.

And behold, some of the scribes said in themselves, This man blasphemeth.

And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said,

Why think ye evil things in your hearts? for whether is easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee? or to say, Arise and walk?

But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then he saith to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed and go unto thy house.

And he arose and went to his house.

But when the multitudes saw it they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power to men.

A similar collation, extended through the rest of the gospels, will shew how vain it is to explain their resemblances and differences by recourse to the once popular invention, of an earlier and shorter document, from which both were derived by translation or interpolation. For if we were to separate those clauses which retain an almost verbal identity, the common portion thus abstracted would hardly furnish, in three or four events out of a hundred, an unbroken narrative, such as would be required in the most brief and meagre history.

We are thus led irresistibly, by the evidence of these partial resemblances, and more numerous variations, when combined with the fact that sixty particulars are the same in both gospels, and given in the same order, to this general conclusion: The two gospels are neither independently formed out of oral traditions,

saith to the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

Now there were some of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins, but God only?

And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they are so reasoning in themselves, said unto them,

Why reason ye these things in your hearts? whether is easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins are forgiven thee? or to say, Arise, take up thy couch, and walk?

But that ye may know the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say to thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go unto thy house.

And immediately he arose, took up the couch, and went forth before them all;

Insomuch that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, We never saw it in this fashion.

nor composed from a common document ; but the later Evangelist has made use of the earlier gospel, in his own selection of incidents to record, and has in some cases adopted the very phraseology, while he has usually varied the narrative, and embodied the results of independent and original information.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE REGULARITY OF THE THIRD GOSPEL.

THREE different opinions have been held on the relative date of St. Luke's Gospel. Many critics, as Beza, Gomar, Basnage, Walch, Harenberg, and Macknight, have maintained that it was the first written. Others, from the statement of Clement, that the gospels with the genealogies were the earliest, have placed it second in order, next to that of St. Matthew. This is the view of Griesbach, who supposes that the gospel of St. Mark was compiled from the two others; and Strauss, in his *Life of Christ*, has adopted it implicitly, as an ascertained truth. But the most usual view has always been, that St. Luke's is the third gospel, not only by its place in the canon, but in the actual date of its composition.

The opinions as to its origin have been equally diverse. Some have endeavoured to explain its features by assuming five or six primitive documents, that were variously used and combined by the three Evangelists. Others, as Schleiermacher, have asserted it to be a compilation out of many short fragments, early committed to writing, which the Evangelist threw together with little regard to the order of time. A direct inquiry, pursued with due caution, will hardly fail to throw light on the truth or falsehood of these and similar hypotheses of modern criticism, and to discover the real structure of the gospel. Before we examine its direct relation to the two others, it is

needful first to determine its regularity, or how far the writer has adhered in it to the real order of events, as they actually occurred.

Here many eminent critics of our own day give their verdict confidently against the Evangelist. Thus Neander, in his *Life of Christ*, remarks, that "the gospel history did not originate in any design to give a connected account of the public ministry of Christ, as a whole, but grew out of traditional accounts of separate scenes in his history, partly transmitted by word of mouth, and partly in written memoirs. Our three first gospels resulted from the compilation of such separate materials, as Luke himself states in his Preface." In like manner Olshausen affirms, that "the three first Evangelists, while composing their works, never thought of stating events according to the succession of time in which they occurred." Dr. Robinson observes, much to the same effect, that "the three first gospels can in no sense be regarded as methodical annals. There is often no definite note of time, and we can only proceed upon conjecture." The latter part of St. Luke, he further states, "is almost entirely wanting in chronological arrangement."

If, however, we turn from these critical decisions to the statements of the Evangelist himself, and consider the most prominent features in both his works, we shall find strong reasons for coming to a directly opposite judgment, and maintaining the substantial, if not the complete regularity, of the whole gospel.

I. First of all, the Preface supplies very weighty evidence. The writer there states, in few words, the object and plan of his own narrative. The following appears to be the most exact version.

"Forasmuch as many have undertaken to compose a narrative concerning the things which are confidently believed among us, even as they delivered them to us, who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word; it seemed good to me also, having traced all things accurately from the very first, to write to thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mayest know the certain truth respecting the accounts wherein thou hast been instructed."

The other questions which have been raised on these words will be considered afterwards. For the present, one remark is enough, that the writer announces his purpose of writing *in order* (καθεξης). “The terms *εξης* and *καθεξης*” as Mr. Greswell justly remarks, “are peculiar to St. Luke, in whose writings each of them occurs five times, either as descriptive of the succession of time or of events, but always of a direct, continuous, and orderly succession. There is one instance where he employs the word, as in his Preface, to describe the course of a narrative, and it is plainly regular. ‘But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it in order to them,’ (Acts xi. 4.) Nor can the meaning be better illustrated than by the passage in Thucydides. ‘These things Thucydides, the Athenian, has written in order, (*εξης*) as each happened.’ To write, then, in order, and to write ‘as each happened,’ were in his view synonymous phrases, and why not in the estimation of St. Luke?” A collation of the passages Luke viii. 1; Acts iii. 24; xi. 24; xviii. 23; Luke vii. 11; ix. 37; Acts xxi. 1; xxv. 17; xxvii. 18, seems to establish the justice of this conclusion, since a regular sequence, either of time or place, is clearly intended by the writer in each instance. Hence the Preface ought to be expounded in the same sense, and implies that the writer intended to narrate the events, for the most part, in the actual order of their occurrence.

II. THE BOOK OF ACTS yields another argument for the same view. It has the same author with the gospel, of which it may be considered as the continuation. Now its regularity admits of no reasonable dispute. From first to last, hardly one instance of departure from the true order of the events can be discovered. Its three main divisions close with the death of Herod, the mission of Paul and Silas, and the imprisonment of the Apostle at Rome, and are strictly successive. The separate events, in the two later divisions, are just as plainly in their exact order, and not a single inversion is to be found. In the first division it is possible that the part referring to Saul’s conversion and

ministry, may slightly overlap the previous and following portions. But even this is very doubtful; and if true, it would be quite reconcileable with the laws of regular history, which does not follow the rule of a chronological table, but merely requires that each connected series of events shall be given in the place which corresponds to the date of its main events. The rest of the book is certainly regular, in the full sense of the term. And hence there must be a strong presumption that the gospel, of which it is a continuation, is also written with a careful regard to historical succession.

III. THE MAIN DIVISIONS of the gospel itself clearly answer to the statement of the Preface, in its simple and natural meaning. It begins with the message to Zacharias, and the conception of the Baptist, and then records the Incarnation, and the infancy and childhood of Jesus, before it enters on his public ministry. In its middle portion, it evidently places the main events in their true order—our Lord's baptism, his return to Galilee, his removal to Capernaum, the Ordination of the Twelve, their Mission, the Transfiguration, and the later Mission of the Seventy—events of which the real sequence is clearly the same as in the gospel. In its close, and the history of Passion Week, the true order is also plainly observed, unless there may be some exception in the minuter details. And thus the main outlines of the gospel confirm the previous reasoning, and disprove the notion that the Evangelist, in spite of the plain words in the Preface, paid little or no regard to the order of time.

IV. THE SPECIAL NOTES OF TIME in this gospel, are a further proof that it was designed to be a regular history. The vision to Mary is said to be "in the sixth month," after the previous vision to Zacharias. The visit of Elizabeth to Mary is next stated to have lasted for three months. The birth of John must then have followed, where it is placed, a few weeks later. The circumcision is noted to have been on the eighth, and the presentation on the fortieth day, and the later visit to Jerusalem at the age of twelve years. Six marks of time are given, to fix

the opening of the Baptist's ministry—the year of Tiberius, the name of the Roman Governor, of three tetrarchs, and of the Jewish high-priests. Last of all, the baptism of Jesus is placed towards the close of John's ministry, and his age is specified when it occurred. These are not the marks of a composition, where events are grouped arbitrarily together, or where the writer employs unrevised fragments of tradition, without caring to dispose them in their proper places, so as to form a connected and orderly narrative.

V. Let us now pursue the same inquiry more in detail. The first main portion of the gospel to be examined is iii. 1—ix. 50, or from the baptism of John to the discourse at Capernaum, after the Transfiguration.

This interval, which answers to No. 1—44, in the numbered list, contains 44 particulars in St. Mark, and 42 in St. Luke. Of these 32 are common to both writers. In all these the order is the very same, except one transposition of the simplest kind. The visit of the mother of Jesus, in St. Luke, is mentioned after the parables; in St. Matthew and St. Mark, before them. But since both events were clearly on the same day, and there is no term in St. Luke to fix the precise order, the true succession is easily restored, and involves hardly any breach of strict regularity.

The force of such a coincidence, great in itself, is further increased by the circumstance, that each writer has introduced particulars, not found in the other gospel. Ten of these are added in St. Luke, and twelve in St. Mark. An arrangement which is not historical will commonly be disturbed, when fresh materials are introduced into the history. No succession but the true one, will allow every event to be inserted, without the risk of its irregularity being detected, and some inconsistency coming to light. Hence the fact that fresh particulars are given by each writer, and still that all the events which are common to both are in the same order, renders the proof of regularity as strong, perhaps, as can possibly be drawn from internal comparison alone.

The greater part of this portion is the very same, in which the first and second gospels vary from each other. From the alarm of Herod, however, to the dispute at Capernaum, the third gospel agrees, not only with the second gospel, but with the first also, as will be seen from the following list, (Matt. xiv. 1—xviii. 6. Mark vi. 14—ix. 37. Luke ix. 7—48.)

29, 30, 31, [32, 33, 34, 36, 37,] 39, 40, 41, 42, i, 43, 44^m.

Here nine events are common to all, and in the same order, while five are omitted in the third gospel only. This agreement, in three writers, is a strong evidence that they all observe the true succession of time.

VI. There is another portion, where the comparison is still more decisive. In No. 47—93, or from the blessing of the young children to the close of the gospels, there are 40 particulars common to St. Matthew and St. Mark, and in all these, with one slight exception in the account of the fig-tree, the order is the very same. St. Matthew also has more particulars, not found in the other gospel, and yet their presence has had no effect, to disturb the common arrangement of both gospels.

How then does St. Luke's gospel bear the comparison in this part of the narrative? The interval, in the second and third gospels, has 46 or 47 particulars, of which thirty-seven are common to both. Yet there are only two examples of apparent inversion, in Nos. 69, 70, and 77, 78. In each instance, the two events, which appear in an opposite order, were closely successive, or strictly contemporaneous. The warning to Judas took place just before or after the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and the three denials of Peter occurred during our Lord's trial before the high-priest, (Mark xiv. 18—25, 64—72. Luke xxii. 19—23, 55—65.)

The dispute concerning precedence (Matt. xx. 24—28. Mark x. 41—45. Luke xxii. 24—27.), may seem to be a third instance, and to involve a greater inversion. The words in St. Luke resemble so closely those in the other gospels, that many have thought them to refer to the same event. But a close

examination seems to justify an opposite opinion, that the occasions were distinct, and that the warning, given a week or ten days earlier, was repeated at the time of the last supper. For the words, Luke xxii. 27, which are not found in the earlier gospels, appear to be a direct allusion to the event recorded by St. John xiii. 1—10, when Jesus washed the feet of his disciples.

Thus it appears that the third gospel, both in its earlier and later portions, has adhered closely to the order of time. Out of seventy events that are common to it with the second gospel, there are only three cases of very slight transposition, and each in the case of events, either strictly contemporary, or occurring on the same day or hour, in immediate succession.

To estimate the force of this argument, we have only to apply the laws of probability. The events, until our Lord's return from Galilee, fix their own order, and may be excluded from the comparison. There remain, from that return to the dispute at Capernaum, No. 7—45, twenty-seven particulars common to both gospels. Let us admit that every pair, on the average, are so closely linked together that they could not easily be parted, or that only thirteen would admit, in irregular narratives, of a free transposition. The chance will then be 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13, or more than 6000 millions to one against the actual agreement, unless one has copied the other, or both have adhered to the true order. If we repeat the same inquiry in the later portion, No. 47—93, and reduce the 37 instances, where all the writers agree in their arrangement, to ten only, because the order is here less arbitrary, the chances against such coincidence, in irregular narratives, would be more than ten millions of millions to one. It seems thus to be almost mathematically certain, either that the later gospel adopted the order of its predecessors, or that each adhered to the true succession of the events themselves.

VII. The irregularity of St. Luke, if it exist at all, must thus be limited to the middle portion, ix. 51—xviii. 14, or from the journey through Samaria to the parable of the publican. Even

if inversions were proved to exist in these chapters, two-thirds of the whole have been shewn to answer the description in the Preface. They are not a cento of fragments, thrown loosely together, but an orderly and connected narrative. The difficulties, however, in this middle portion, require a fuller examination.

The general opinion of recent critics has been unfavourable, with regard to the accuracy of the writer in this part of the gospel. Neander, Olshausen, and Wieseler, in Germany, and Dr. Robinson in America, all agree that two or three journeys have been confounded into one, and mixed with extraneous matter. The last of these, in his *Harmony*, disposes it into sections, the numbers of which, 80, 81, 89, 86, 87, 88, 48, 49, 51, 52, 53, 94, 95, 96, 97—101, 82, 102, 103, are a sufficient index to the latitude of transposition. Most German writers, of late, appear to hold a similar view. Let us endeavour to test its truth by a direct inquiry.

The third gospel has been already shewn to be regular from the baptism of John to the dispute at Capernaum (iii. 1—ix. 50.) and again from the blessing of the little children, where it rejoins the two others, to the close (xviii. 15—xxiv). The middle portion, if also regular, must be included between these limits of time, or relate to the last half-year of our Saviour's ministry.

Now the opening verse, ix. 51, agrees evidently with this conception of the true place of the narrative, and apparently refers the whole to the last journey to Jerusalem. "And it came to pass, when the days were fulfilling of his being received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." So far as this verse can be a key to the structure, the history from this point must belong to that final journey, which issued first in our Lord's death, and then in His resurrection and ascension into glory.

Starting from this first presumption, we find several other statements, which seem to confirm the same view. The Seventy Disciples are sent by Jesus "before his face, into every city and place whither he himself was about to come." He was therefore about to journey in a route clearly defined and well known.

Soon after we are told that "as they journeyed, he entered into a certain village." (x. 38.) Still later, xiii. 22. the writer tells us that "he journeyed through the cities and villages, teaching, and making a journey towards Jerusalem." His reply to the Pharisees, xiii. 33. reports the same fact. "I must journey to-day and to-morrow, and the day following, for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." In the next chapter it is said that "great multitudes journeyed along with him," xiv. 25. A further notice of the same kind occurs, xvii. 11. "And it came to pass, as he journeyed to Jerusalem, he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee." There seems also a distinct allusion to the unusual publicity of this journey in the charge against him before Pilate, xxiii. 5. "He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee even unto this place." The words would naturally refer to a recent journey, attended by great multitudes, which had begun in Galilee, and was just ended in Jerusalem.

Several parts, again, in this series of events, are clearly connected in their time of occurrence. The Mission of the Seventy, x. 1., was after the incident in Samaria, and 'the same hour' they returned from it, our Lord uttered the subsequent discourse and thanksgiving. The whole passage, xi. 14—xiii. 9, though its contents are various, has plain marks of immediate sequence. While Jesus was speaking, the Pharisee asked him to dine; and while the scribes were laying wait for him in the Pharisee's house, the crowds of hearers were assembled, to whom the following discourse was addressed. 'In the same season' the fate of the Galileans was reported to him, and the parable of the fig-tree was given. No transition appears in the form of the narrative, where it unites again with the other gospels, xvii. 15; and it is plain that our Lord, at that time, was really in his last journey. All these are further presumptions that these chapters are the regular narrative of one single journey, ending at Jerusalem.

There are four or five serious difficulties which stand in the way of this arrangement.

First, St. John tells us that our Lord went up secretly to Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles, or the October before his crucifixion; that he was there at the Feast of Dedication, or in December; that he then retired beyond Jordan, returned for a single day to Bethany, retired again to Ephraim, near the wilderness, and finally reached Bethany six days before the last Passover. No mention is found here of any return to Galilee in this interval of time. Yet if none took place, the last journey was secret and not public, through Samaria direct, and not through Perea, as in the three first gospels, and full six months before the last Passover. This secret, hasty journey, could never answer to the description given by St. Luke in the third gospel.

Again, the passage, Luke ix. 51—62. seems to imply a direct route on the last journey through Samaria to Jerusalem. Yet the two other gospels, and St. Luke in other chapters, agree that the last journey was by way of Perea.

Thirdly, after the return of the Seventy, our Lord is said to have entered the village of Martha and Mary. It is inferred from the fourth gospel that this was Bethany. If so, the journey has already reached the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem. Yet we find no allusion here to a close of that journey, and seven chapters follow before the arrival at Jericho, followed by the last entrance into the city.

Fourthly, in chapter xi., after the return of the Seventy, we have a discourse on blasphemy, almost verbally the same as in Matt. xii. and which is there said to have been spoken on the same day with the Parable of the Sower. But this, in all three gospels, is earlier than the Mission of the Twelve Apostles. How then could it occur after the far later mission of the Seventy, and their return?

These appear to be the chief reasons which have led many writers to impeach the regularity, and even the accuracy and information, of the Evangelist. They therefore suppose him to have compiled oral or written fragments, with no real insight into their real sequence and historical connexion.

1. The two first of these difficulties have a common source. If St. Luke, xi. 51—62. implies that our Lord, in his last journey, passed from Galilee through Samaria to Jerusalem, three contradictions appear unavoidable. The route is inconsistent with the former gospels, and even with Luke xix. 1—20. The Mission of the Seventy, either in Samaria or Judea, clashes with the account of St. John ; while the interval on the journey, after passing through Samaria, is far too brief for the various incidents in the eight chapters which follow.

There seem only two ways in which the difficulty can be removed. Either this was not the last journey, but the last but one, and before the Feast of Dedication, or else the actual route must have been the reverse, through Samaria into Galilee.

To the former view there are two weighty objections. It destroys the emphasis of the phrase, ix. 51., which seems to affirm that the journey, so stedfastly resolved upon, was the same which Jesus foresaw would issue in his rejection and death ; and after the journey has been so distinctly announced, no mention will be found of its further continuance and completion, but the writer will recur at once to earlier events, before it began.

The other hypothesis, which Mr. Greswell has adopted, removes all these difficulties. Our Lord, it is thus supposed, returned through Samaria into Galilee, on purpose to commence a public and final journey to Jerusalem, the consummation of his whole ministry. He then sent out seventy heralds through Galilee and Perea, to announce his approach "in every city and place whither he was about to come." On their return he set out at once, and journeyed in a fixed route, with great publicity, towards Jerusalem. He first left a parting message to the cities of Northern Galilee, then travelled along the border between Galilee and Samaria, crossed over into Perea, being still within Herod's jurisdiction, (xvii. 11. xiv. 31.) and at length arrived at Jericho, and travelled westward to Bethany and Jerusalem.

It may be urged, however, that such a return northward through Samaria, is inconsistent with the words, "he stedfastly

set his face to go to Jerusalem." Why should the enmity of the Samaritans be thus aroused, if our Lord were retiring further from Jerusalem, at the very hour when they refused to receive him ?

A reference to the actual circumstances will remove this formidable objection. The case was not that of an ordinary Jew, simply travelling through Samaria to one of the annual feasts. The fame of Jesus had now reached its height. His miracles must have been notorious throughout Samaria. The question would have been raised there, as well as in Judea and Galilee, whether he were the Messiah, or some great prophet, or a deceiver of the people. His authority, if he had lent it to the Samaritan worship, would doubtless have been hailed by them with eager exultation, and his claims have only been the more freely recognized, because they had been resisted and denied by the Jews. Yet our Lord was now about to pass by Samaria, and to propose himself once more to the Jews, in the most public manner, as a prophet sent from God. He announced his purpose of journeying for this end from Galilee to Jerusalem, so as to arrive there at the ensuing Passover. Such a journey would be a public condemnation of the Samaritans, since it proclaimed Jerusalem, and not Sychem, which he was passing by without notice, to be the true centre of divinely-appointed worship. If this purpose were announced by the disciples as clearly as it was formed by our Lord deliberately, it would fully explain the enmity excited by the journey, though he were then passing into Galilee, and not into Judea.

That such is the real meaning of the passage may be inferred from the Mission of the Seventy, which follows. The addresses ix. 57—62. imply that a renewed and public proclamation of the kingdom was now to begin. Where, then, is it meant that we should place their mission? Certainly not in Samaria, which would contradict the uniform and settled law of our Saviour's ministry. "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Not in Judea, since we find that several chapters later he is still in the dominions of Herod. The mention of Chorazin

and Capernaum, the resemblance to the former mission of the Twelve, and the moral congruity of one last public warning, where Jesus had laboured from the first, are proofs that they were sent out in Galilee, to the places in that province and in Perea. The account is thus harmonized with the fourth gospel, which traces our Lord's course till he reaches Ephraim. Before a last journey from Galilee, our Lord must have returned through Samaria from Ephraim, which lay on its southern border.

2. The village of Martha and Mary occasions a second difficulty. If this were Bethany, as generally inferred from John xi. 1, the account of the last journey must be very irregular, or two journeys have been thrown into one; since the narrative would have brought our Lord to Jerusalem, nine chapters before the mention of his arrival at Jericho, and his final entry.

The words of St. John, however, when closely examined, are by no means a clear proof of this assumed identity, and lie open to a very different interpretation. They may be strictly rendered as follows: "Now a certain man was sick, namely Lazarus, of Bethany, out of the village of Mary and her sister Martha. It was that Mary, who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick." The latter clause is a reference, either to the gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark, who relate the anointing in Bethany, or to the fact as widely known by oral tradition. The former seems to be a similar allusion to the village mentioned by St. Luke. But the use of two distinct prepositions leaves it rather doubtful, in itself, whether this were the same as Bethany. And this doubt seems confirmed by the similar passage in John i. 45, where it is said: "Now Philip was of Bethsaida, out of the city of Andrew and Peter." It is clear, from the two first gospels, that the home of Peter at this very time, was Capernaum, and not Bethsaida. If then the city of Andrew and Peter is distinct from Bethsaida, the village of Martha may equally be distinct from Bethany, and the two prepositions have a different meaning. It is a further reason for supposing the two places distinct, that

St. Luke mentions Bethany more than once in his gospel, and leaves this village of Martha without a name.

The reasoning of Mr. Greswell, from John i. 46—48, and vii. 41, 42, to prove the contrast in the meaning of the two prepositions, does not appear to be equally just. On the contrary, these alone would rather tend to shew their equivalence. They would imply that, in the view of Nathanael, one who was *of* Nazareth was also *out of* it; and that, in the opinion of the objectors, to be *out of* Galilee, and *of* Bethlehem, were incompatible. If, however, we suppose $\epsilon\kappa$ to be used, not absolutely for the native place, but for an earlier, as distinct from an actual residence, the natural scope of these passages will be retained, and yet the distinctness of the two expressions, in John i. 45; xi. 1, will be equally justified. One will signify that Philip had resided at Capernaum, before he removed to Bethsaida; and the other, that Lazarus had once had his home at the village mentioned by St. Luke, before he removed to Bethany.

The chief objection which seems to lie against this construction, is the double journey of Martha and Mary, which it would imply, first to their own village in Galilee, after the resurrection of Lazarus, and again to Bethany, where they received our Lord at the close of his journey, six days before the crucifixion. But if the village, on this account, were held to be no other than Bethany, the exception to the regularity of St. Luke's narrative may still be of a very partial kind. For in this case we may suppose the feast to be the same, which St. John has recorded, and in which he notes that Martha served. Some incidents of the last journey might have reached St. Luke, without their exact time and place being specified, and these might be inserted in its course, where they would least interrupt its continuity, and still the character of the whole work, as an orderly and successive narrative, be retained. But the passage, John i. 45, where the idiom is just the same as in John xi. 1, perhaps inclines the

weight of evidence in favour of the other view, that the village of Martha and Mary was really situate in Galilee.

3. A third difficulty relates to the discourse on blasphemy, Luke xi. 14—36, which is the same, for the most part, with the one in St. Matthew xii. 22—45. If the events were the same, St. Luke's gospel will be convicted here of great irregularity. But besides the different arrangement of the two main portions, the time is so clearly marked in each gospel, that they can be identified, only by charging one writer with positive error and misstatement. The discourse, Matthew xii. was followed by a visit of the mother and brethren of Jesus, and then the same day by a series of parables, while in the evening our Lord crossed over the lake, and returned the next day. In St. Luke, the discourse is followed by a morning meal in the house of the Pharisee, and then by a long discourse to the multitudes, entirely different from the parables in Matthew xiii. Mark iv. and one which implies that teaching by parables had been often adopted before. Our Lord announces also the near approach of his own sufferings, and the rapid completion, to the Jews, of their time of national probation. The slaughter of the Galileans, which was now reported to him, it is most probable, was the secret cause of that feud between Pilate and Herod, which was appeased just before the crucifixion. Thus all the marks of time prove that the events were distinct, though the two discourses have so great a resemblance.

It is a further mark of distinction, that the demoniac, in St. Matthew, was both blind and dumb, and his dispossession was attended with a double cure ; but in St. Luke dumbness alone is mentioned. This was a common feature of possession, but blindness was altogether distinct and unusual, and St. Luke would therefore not be likely to have omitted so remarkable a feature in the cure. Also dispossessions, and the charge of a league with Beelzebub, were clearly of frequent occurrence in our Lord's public ministry, Matthew iv. 24 ; ix. 32—34 ; xii. 22, 38 ; xvi. 1 ; x. 25. 1 Cor. i. 22.

If we now resume the analysis of these intervening chapters, after the main objections have been removed, we find still further evidence that they form a regular narrative of one and the same journey. After the return of the Seventy, who were sent out expressly as forerunners of our Lord, we see in x. 38, that a journey was now begun. The whole passage, xi. 14—xiii. 9, is inseparably connected by marks of time, and includes further proofs that it belonged to the closing part of our Lord's ministry. The reproof of the Pharisees and lawyers is nearly the same as in Matt. xxiii., with the same warning of approaching retribution. Hence its natural place is in the last journey to Jerusalem, rather than in the middle of the previous year, to which it would belong, if it took place the same day with Matt. xii, xiii. The appeal, xii. 35—48, is also nearly the same as in Matt. xxiv., and would be specially appropriate, only at the approach of the crucifixion. The passage, xii. 50, implies that our Lord's sufferings and death were now very near at hand. The fifty-sixth verse, with its warning inquiry—"How is it that ye do not discern this time?"—seems to prove that our Lord's ministry had now assumed the form of a parting appeal to an unbelieving people. The anecdote respecting the Galileans, when compared with Luke xxiii. 6—12, bears the marks of having occurred very shortly before the crucifixion, since it would be a natural explanation of the variance between Pilate and Herod, and of the presence of the latter with an armed force in Jerusalem. The parable of the fig-tree also intimates that the season of probation to the Jews was now near its close.

A Sabbath next intervenes, when the journey would of course be suspended. After this the notice follows immediately that "he journeyed through the cities and villages, teaching, and pursuing his journey toward Jerusalem." But he is still in Herod's district, and his journey so public, and so numerous attended, as to excite the jealousy of the tetrarch, as well as of the Pharisees. The words of xiii. 32, 33, seem to imply that our Lord was distant three days' journey from Jerusalem, and

shew that he professed publicly to be travelling thither. We have next another Sabbath, the events of which seem to extend to xiv. 24. We have then immediately another notice that the journey is resumed, for we are told that "great multitudes journeyed along with him." The concourse of publicans and sinners leads to a series of parables, and the covetousness of the Pharisees to further discourses and warnings, which reach as far as xvii. 10. Then, in the very next verse, we have a renewed notice, that he was still on his way to Jerusalem, and even a general statement of the route which he was following. "And it came to pass, as he journeyed to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee." The words, in themselves, might admit of two meanings, either that he journeyed through the central portion of both provinces, or along the border line between them. On the former view, since he was journeying toward Jerusalem, the words must naturally have appeared in the opposite order, "through the midst of Galilee and Samaria." Hence we may infer that the Evangelist means to express that the route of our Lord was along the border line of the two provinces, which best explains the incident that Jewish and Samaritan lepers were found together. The course, since it led to Jerusalem, and by the way of Jericho, must have been eastward towards Perea. The inquiry of the Pharisees, which follows, implies that the journey led to a general impression of our Lord being about openly to claim kingly authority, which is further confirmed by the verse xix. 11. The incident of the little children, which soon follows, is fixed by the other gospels to have occurred in Perea. In xviii. 31, we see that the journey was drawing to its close, and our Lord therefore again predicts to his disciples its tragical issue, with a renewed promise of His resurrection. And now the narrative brings us to Jericho, and by way of Bethany to Jerusalem.

Thus it appears that, if we assume Ephraim, south of Samaria, for the starting-point in Luke ix. 51, the eight chapters which follow will exhibit, with slight exceptions at the most, a regular and

continuous account of the last journey; which was preceded by the Mission of the Seventy, began with a parting circuit of Galilee, continued through Perca, and ended with the final entry into Jerusalem. The statement of the writer in his Preface will thus have been verified here, as in the rest of the gospel, and he will have written the events of our Lord's ministry, as he promised to Theophilus, in orderly succession.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE RELATIVE ORDER OF ST. LUKE'S GOSPEL. GENERAL ARGUMENTS.

THE regularity of the third gospel, in two of its main portions, has now been clearly proved; and has been shewn to be highly probable, even in that middle portion, which has often been held to establish an opposite view. The notion of Schleiermacher and others, that it has been compiled loosely from separate fragments, is found to be inconsistent with the most prominent facts in the comparison of the three gospels. We may now safely regard it as one connected whole, and inquire into its relative date, with reference to St. Matthew's and St. Mark's narratives.

On this subject, also, opinions have differed widely. Many writers, as Beza, Gomar, Harenberg, Vogel, and Macknight, have maintained that St. Luke's is really the first gospel in point of time. Others place it second, and suppose that St. Mark compiled his own from the two others. Olshausen suggests that some fragments of it existed before St. Mark, and were used by him, though as a whole, he places it later. A recent author has advanced the opinion that it is later than St. Matthew, and also than an Aramaic form of St. Mark, which was the original gospel of St. Peter; but that St. Mark's Greek gospel was published after it, and was simply a translation. The most usual opinion, however, places St. Luke after the two others, while some conceive that its origin was quite independent

of them, and others that the writer made free use of their histories.

Let us first examine briefly those views which are least usual, and appear to be most easily disproved. The first is the opinion of Griesbach, that St. Mark's gospel is a mere compilation from the two earlier narratives of St. Luke and St. Matthew. Dr. Strauss, in his *Life of Jesus*, reasons on this assumption as a certain truth (i. 59.) Yet, perhaps, of all the hypotheses, this is the most untenable.

The sum of the argument may be stated in few words. The whole of St. Mark's gospel, except twenty-four verses, is contained in one of the two others. Consequently, it might be compiled from them, and whoever believes that a later Evangelist copied from the earlier, must conclude that such was its real origin. If the writer drew from any other source, how are we to explain the fact that all, except twenty-four verses, is found in their gospels only?

It is clear, however, that the same fact may be equally explained in a different way. If St. Luke wrote after both the others, and was careful to insert most of the incidents peculiar to the shorter and less familiar gospel, the very same result would follow. Nearly every part of St. Mark would then be found, either in the earlier or later gospel. To decide between the two explanations, we must consider which is more probable in itself, and will account for special features in the relation they bear to each other.

And first the question must arise—What could be the possible motive for the supposed compilation? The two gospels, from which it would be made, must have been of authority in the church, and actually in circulation. The mere introduction of two cures, of a single parable, and a few brief passages of the same kind, could never be the main reason for entering on a work, in the view of the writer himself, so important as a formal narrative of our Lord's ministry. Whatever the source from which these twenty-four verses were derived, it is impossible to

believe that they would supply him with such scanty materials only, wherewith to enrich his narrative, and give it a distinct and individual importance to the Church of Christ.

On the other hand, if the gospel of St. Luke followed the two others, a sufficient motive for the composition of each is readily found. St. Mark, compared with St. Matthew, has not only a considerable amount of original matter, but a distinct character and object, to amplify the details of the narrative, while abridging the discourses, and at the same time, to remove transpositions, and restore the true order of time. St. Luke's again, besides adopting the rectified order of the second gospel, incorporating some of its graphic details, and most of its peculiar incidents, has so much that is peculiarly its own, as to form a sufficient and weighty reason for its publication. All is consistent and natural on this view, while on the other, the composition of St. Mark's gospel admits of no reasonable explication. For its main excellence is the vividness of its details, which indicates the presence of an eye-witness, and is quite inconsistent with the notion, that it is a mere compilation.

But another reason, equally decisive against Griesbach's hypothesis, will be found in a close observation of those parts of the second gospel, which are wanting in the first, and which one of the two later Evangelists may be supposed to have borrowed from the other. These are mainly the following, Mark i. 21—28, 35—39 ; iii. 13—19 ; vi. 10, 11 ; ix. 38—40 ; xii. 38—44, besides the closer agreement in several passages common to the three gospels, as the account of the demoniac of Gadara, and the raising of the daughter of Jairus.

Now in the first of these passages, if St. Mark had borrowed additional incidents from St. Luke, while following the general outline of St. Matthew, he would most naturally have copied or abridged the account, in the third gospel, of the visit to Nazareth, which appears there in close connection with the abode at Capernaum, and the first act of dispossession. On the other view of the succession, nothing can be more simple and

natural than their relation to each other. St. Mark, restoring the cure in Simon's house to its true order, is led to mention the cure in the synagogue, which took place immediately before it ; while St. Luke goes still further in supplying the connecting links of the narrative, and describes that visit to Nazareth, implied in Matt. iv. 13, which led to the first public exercise of our Lord's ministry at Capernaum.

The next passages which nearly correspond, while absent in Matthew, are Mark iii. 13—19. Luke vi. 12—17. In St. Mark, this wears the appearance of a simple link in the chain of St. Matthew's narrative, xii. 15—24, pointing out the time when the Apostles were ordained, as distinct from that of their mission ; and it still leaves a considerable interval, before the occurrence of the discourse on blasphemy. If St. Mark had borrowed from St. Luke, he would naturally have introduced one or more of the other incidents in the third gospel, the cure of the Centurion's servant, the raising of the Widow's son at Nain, or the message of the Baptist, or the attendance of the Galilean women. Since he has passed all these by in silence, it must be far more probable that St. Luke has here given a second supplement of larger extent, than that St. Mark has selected only a few verses from this portion of Luke, and neglected other incidents of higher interest.

Again, the most distinctive portion of St. Luke's gospel is contained in the middle chapters, ix. 51—xviii. 14, which follow after the dispute at Capernaum, and the reply to the address of John. That address itself is given by both Evangelists, almost in the same words, and either might have borrowed it from the other. But if St. Mark merely compiled his gospel from the two others, how is it that he entirely passes over these intervening chapters, and leaves the same hiatus here as the first gospel ? This is a cardinal feature in the comparison, and decisively refutes the hypothesis, that the second gospel has been compiled from the two others ; since there is not one verse in it which answers to the most characteristic portion of St. Luke. On this ground

alone, Olshausen is led to admit that the view of Griesbach is quite untenable.

The same feature appears in the narrative of the Crucifixion. The incidents peculiar to St. Luke, compared with St. Matthew, the appearance of the angel in the garden, the trial before Herod, and the penitent thief, are none of them found in St. Mark's gospel, and hence a further proof that this was not compiled from the two others.

Olshausen, however, has supposed that one or two sections of St. Luke, though not the whole gospel, were earlier than St. Mark, and used by him in his own narrative. This remark seems afterwards limited to the section, Luke x. 3—9, in which the harmony is said to be specially apparent. Yet when we compare the mission of the Twelve in St. Mark with the mission of the Twelve and of the Seventy in St. Luke, (Mark vi. 7—13. Luke ix. 1—6; x. 1—12.), the two former agree in about ten clauses, and the first and third in about three only. The hypothesis, therefore, that St. Mark has borrowed his account of the mission of the Twelve from Luke's account of the later mission of the Seventy, highly improbable in itself, becomes utterly impossible when the passages are closely examined. The relation is fully explained, if we suppose that St. Luke followed St. Mark in the mission of the Twelve, but reserved one or two sentences, which were twice uttered, that he might give them on their second occurrence, in the mission of the Seventy, which he alone has placed on record.

Another hypothesis has been lately proposed by Mr. Smith, in his valuable and conclusive work on the voyage and shipwreck of St. Paul; that St. Mark has merely translated an Aramaic original, written by St. Peter, and that the gospel of St. Luke is later than this original and the Greek gospel of St. Matthew, but earlier than the translation; so that it bears to St. Matthew a verbal resemblance in many parts, and is elsewhere related to St. Mark as two versions from the same original. The passages appealed to in evidence are the accounts of the Storm, and of the

healing of the Ruler's daughter, Matt. viii. 23—27; ix. 18—26. Mark iv. 35—41; v. 22—43. Luke viii. 22—25, 41—56.

The real evidence, however, even in these selected portions, appears adverse to such a view. In Luke viii. 22, the two clauses are modified, one from Matthew, and the other from Mark; but the former is not a verbal copy, and the latter is not a varied translation, but a copy with an added circumstance, and where a provincial idiom has been removed. The phrase, "a squall of wind," is verbally the same as in Mark, and the sea in St. Matthew is paraphrased by "the lake" in the third gospel. The words "they were filled and were in jeopardy" are neither a transcript nor a varied translation from either, but a new and distinct phrase, less dramatic, and more historical. In v. 24, the resemblance to each gospel is exactly of the same kind. In the exclamation at the close, St. Matthew and St. Mark agree more closely with each other, than either of them with St. Luke. Similar remarks will apply, with equal truth, to the narrative of the cure; and thus the very passages on which the conjecture has been founded, seem really enough to disprove it. In other passages its entire inability to account for the actual resemblances and variations, would be still more apparent.

We may now return to the main question, the comparative priority of St. Luke and St. Matthew. In the present chapter the general arguments will be considered, several of which have been claimed, with equal confidence, in favour of the two opposite views, and will therefore call for double caution in the enquiry.

I. The words of the preface have been urged by Macknight and others, as a strong reason for the opinion, that St. Luke's gospel was the first written. The many writings alluded to cannot denote the gospels of Matthew and Mark; and still, when St. Luke was referring to histories of our Lord, previously written, he could not pass over these in silence, if he were aware of their existence. Still less could he mix them with apocryphal and defective accounts in one common description, to their serious disparagement. Hence his gospel must have been com-

posed earlier than theirs, or at least before he was aware of their existence.

The reply of Dr. Townson is as follows. The two other gospels are referred to in the second clause of the preface, for the word there used applies equally to written and oral tradition. Also St. Luke had no motive for naming them more fully, since he could neither mean to use them as vouchers for his facts, nor to justify his work by their example, and he could not make an encomium on their gospels, without starting inquiries into the motives of his own, quite inconsistent, in the reply they would need, with the brevity and modesty of his introduction. Hug has carried this view still further, and offers the following paraphrase. "Many have composed histories of the actions of our Lord, such as those which the eye-witnesses and ministers of the doctrine have published. It will therefore be permitted me also to enumerate the events for thee, according to their succession, that thou mayest be acquainted with the truth and certainty of the different relations delivered to thee; especially as I have carefully followed the events on their theatre, when they began to be developed."

The contrast of these explications proves the need of caution in all reasonings from the words of the preface. The following remarks, however, seem to make it probable that St. Luke here implies his actual acquaintance with the two other gospels.

First, the clause respecting the tradition of eye-witnesses refers in some way to the many compilations, and is not linked directly with St. Luke's own work, which is first mentioned in the clause that follows. Three meanings are possible; that the confident belief of Christians was guided by those reports of the eye-witnesses; that the many narratives were based on the oral tradition of the apostles; or lastly, that their plan was borrowed from actual narratives, given by eye-witnesses and ministers of the word.

The first view, which Olshausen adopts, is hardly consistent with the structure of the original words. The order should then

have been (των πραγματων, των εν ημιν, καθως παρεδωσαν κ. τ. λ., πεπληροφορημενων.) As they now stand, the second clause must refer to the leading fact or idea of the first, and not belong to the dependent participle at its close. It is the composition of the narratives, and not the confident belief of Christians, of which the rule and manner are defined.

The two other constructions, in point of grammar, are equally admissible. The choice will depend either on historical probability, or on the purpose of the apology.

If oral traditions alone are meant, the sequence will be as follows. First, many apocryphal and imperfect gospels, now lost and forgotten. Secondly, the narrative of one who was neither an eye-witness nor an early minister of the word, but learned the facts at second hand. Thirdly, the gospel of St. Matthew, an eye-witness, and one of the Twelve. We must then suppose that the need of a written account had become so manifest as to lead to the composition of many works, before any of the eye-witnesses thought fit to place the facts on record, and thereby to secure the Church against the spread of falsehoods; and that even after they appeared, a writer of secondary and more remote authority was left to supply the want, while all the apostles and early companions of the Lord maintained a dead silence with regard to any written testimony. Such an opinion is hard to reconcile with the wisdom of inspired teachers, or with the natural instincts of the human heart. The eye-witnesses of such works could not but speak, and when once there was need and occasion for written teaching, surely they could not but write, of those great things which they had seen and heard.

On the other view we have this order. First, the gospel of St. Matthew, by one of the Twelve, having the double authority of an eye-witness and an inspired ruler of the church. Next, that of St. Mark, under the guidance of another apostle, the foremost of the Twelve, in which further and more graphic details were supplied with like authority. Thirdly, many narratives of a similar kind, composed with reference to the wants of new

circles of converts, as the gospel spread more widely, and in which other traditional facts were imperfectly set forth, though designed to meet a real want of the Church of Christ. Fourthly, the gospel of St. Luke, which fulfilled the idea of a gospel, framed by accurate investigation, in contrast to the immediate testimony of eye-witnesses, and thus answered the objects the others failed to satisfy, while it became an important supplement to the two gospels that had already appeared.

On this view the apology is perhaps even more suitable than on the other. If no authentic gospel had yet been published, the apostles would seem, either purposely to have deferred the work, and then to attempt it would be to impugn their wisdom or zeal; or else to have resigned it to others, and no reference to imperfect narratives would then be required, to justify a well qualified writer in supplying a clear want of the Church of Christ. But if two gospels, or even one only, was already extant, some explanation would seem required of the motives for writing another. In this case, the composition of many other narratives on their model would prove the desire for still fuller information, while the fact that these were inaccurate would justify St. Luke in publishing another account, supplementary to the two earlier gospels, and more authentic and complete than the narratives to which he alludes.

Again, the term eye-witness, which occurs here only, is very appropriate if referred to St. Matthew, one of the twelve apostles. The other term, *ὁπηρέτης*, is also rare in the New Testament, and is applied by St. Luke elsewhere to two Christian teachers only, the apostle Paul, and John Mark, the traditional writer of the second gospel. Hence a tacit reference to each gospel is no improbable interpretation. The eye-witnesses were all ministers of the word; but all the ministers of the word were not eye-witnesses. Without distinguishing the terms too widely, or excluding a reference to the oral teaching of the apostles and their companions, it seems not unlikely that the double phrase

may contain an implied allusion to the authors of the two first canonical gospels.

But how could it be a motive for the composition, in this case, that Theophilus might know the certainty of the things wherein he had been instructed? With regard to Theophilus himself, it is probable that his instruction hitherto had been by oral teaching only. He needed, then, more distinct information in a written form; and the evangelist was able to furnish it in the very shape and manner which the case required. With reference to the Church at large, the additional narratives were a proof that the two authentic gospels had not exhausted the fund of truth, actually current among Christians, and which it was desirable to embody in a permanent form. Accurate knowledge, careful investigation, and a Divine call to the task, were alone needed to justify a further narrative, and of all these St. Luke was consciously in possession. The very same reasons which have made the work a lasting benefit to the Church, would clearly warrant its composition, even although the writer were fully aware that two other gospels were already written.

II. The account of the ascension in St. Luke's gospel, has also been thought a sign of its earlier date. How could St. Matthew, if he wrote first, have neglected to mention a fact of such importance? Its omission by St. Matthew, and by St. Mark in direct narrative, is held to prove that it had been recorded before. Dr. Townson, on the contrary, numbers this omission among the signs that St. Matthew wrote very early. "If he had not written while the ascension was fresh in memory, and the spectators of it continued together at Jerusalem, he could scarce have failed to notice it."

The real question seems to be whether an eye-witness in the midst of the scenes, or a later inquirer, would be likely to give the history in the most complete and continuous form. A written gospel, by any of the apostles, would be a selection out of more abundant materials, and the nature of the choice would be partly determined by the position of the writer, and the circle

of readers to whom it was first of all addressed. Now the last chapter in Matthew has for its central fact the appearance in Galilee, while the facts in St. Luke, after the resurrection, are all confined to the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. The former character suits a gospel written for the Church in Judea, while the events of our Lord's life in and near Jerusalem were fresh in their minds. The latter character would suit a later gospel, for converts at a distance from Palestine. The view of Dr. Townson seems therefore to be a fair inference from the probable motives, that would guide an earlier or a later evangelist in the composition of his narrative. The ascension is plainly implied, also, in the gospels where it is not fully expressed, so that the detailed account of it in St. Luke's gospel is no proof at all of its earlier composition.

III. The gospel of St. Luke, compared with that of St. Matthew, gives a still fuller account of our Lord's infancy. This also has been thought a sign of its priority. Especially it has been urged that St. Matthew, had he written earlier, would have given the true genealogy, and not merely that of Joseph, our Lord's supposed father. His accurate mention of dates and intervals in these chapters is alleged in proof of the same opinion. In the other gospels, it is said, there is scarcely a single date to fix the time of any event, a circumstance very improbable, if they were composed earlier.

An opposite conclusion, however, seems more reasonable. A Gospel, written early for Jewish Christians, would be likely to select those facts in our Lord's infancy, which proved the fulfilment of the Jewish prophecies, his descent from David, and his birth at Bethlehem. Just so it is in St. Matthew's gospel, which begins with the legal genealogy from Abraham and David, and then confirms the birth at Bethlehem by a fact, public in its nature, which must have been notorious at Jerusalem. St. Luke, on the contrary, gives details in exact and careful succession; the very way in which an investigator, who was not an eye-witness, and who wrote for converts at a distance both in

time and place, might be expected to compose. His mention of dates and intervals is certainly an argument rather for the later than the earlier origin of the work.

A similar remark applies to the genealogies. Assuming for the present that the one in St. Luke is really that of Mary, this would rather evince its later origin. The main purpose of the genealogies must have been practical, to prove that Jesus was the promised Son of David. With unbelievers this would be effected only by his legal genealogy, through Joseph, his reputed father, and with believers, by his actual descent, through Mary his real mother. Hence the former would be suitable in an earlier gospel, designed for the conversion of the Jews, but the latter in a subsequent narrative, intended for the instruction of believing converts among the Gentiles.

IV. The accounts of the Resurrection are another sign of St. Matthew's priority. In his gospel the whole converges plainly on that appearance in Galilee, which our Lord had promised before he suffered,—a promise twice repeated after his resurrection, Matt. xxvi. 32; xxviii. 7, 10. It was evidently the same, which St. Paul mentions, to more than five hundred brethren at once, 1 Cor. xv. 6, and took place on a particular mountain, by express and repeated appointment. Matt. xxviii. 16. Hence St. Matthew's gospel has precisely the features we should expect in the one first written. It singles out the most prominent appearance of our Lord, which had the most numerous witnesses. The motive becomes clearer by a comparison with St. Mark. For he also has recorded the double promise of the appearance in Galilee; but since it was already notorious, and reported by St. Matthew, he replaces it with a brief account of the earliest appearances, in their order of occurrence. The second and third of these are afterwards unfolded by St. Luke, and the first of them by the beloved St. John in the fourth gospel. There is thus a tolerably clear indication of the true order of the gospels, in this one comparison alone.

V. St. Matthew, again, compared with St. Luke, is more copious in doctrinal discourses, while in St. Luke the incidents are more numerous. It is evident that the longer discourses would be likely to be soonest forgotten in the keeping of mere tradition, while miracles and striking incidents would survive in the memory of our Lord's disciples, or of those who heard them from the lips of the apostles. There is thus a strong presumption from this feature of St. Matthew's gospel, exemplified in the Sermon on the Mount, the Apostolic Commission, the Parables, the Discourse on Humility, the Woes on the Pharisees, and the Discourse on the Mount of Olives, that its composition was earlier than those of St. Mark and St. Luke.

VI. Another difference between St. Matthew and St. Luke consists in the comparative development of the earlier part of our Lord's public ministry. From the Baptism of John to the Discourse at Capernaum, Matt. iii.—xviii. Luke iii.—ix. 50, there are in the former sixteen chapters, and in the latter less than seven, or 570 and 326 verses respectively. In other words, the length of this portion, in St. Luke, is only three-fifths of that which it occupies in the other gospel. It is natural to suppose that an earlier writer would dwell rather on the former part of our Lord's long continued labours, and that another, whose memoir was, in a certain sense, supplementary, would compress it in the parts already recorded, and give a fuller development to the later and omitted portions. And, accordingly, the third gospel, while its total length is greater even than St. Matthew's, and nearly double that of St. Mark, is actually, between these limits, more brief than the narrative contained in the second gospel.

All these general reasons concur in the same result, that the gospel of St. Luke did not precede the two others, which are placed before it in the canon, but really followed them in the order of its publication.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE RELATIVE ORDER OF ST. LUKE'S GOSPEL. THE FIRST YEAR OF THE PUBLIC MINISTRY.

THE way is now prepared for the inductive examination, which proves that St. Luke wrote after the date of the two other gospels, and made use of them in the composition of his own. Before instituting this inquiry, in detail, it is needful to preface with a few general observations.

The principle, then, that each later Evangelist knew the writings of his predecessors, will by no means imply, as some have hastily assumed, that he would become a mere copyist, even in the parts common to both writers. Each of them was an original authority, possessed of independent information, and might either use it independently, or combine it with the previous accounts, according to the plan and object of his own work. We may assume, as certain, that each later gospel would have a double purpose ; to furnish a new testimony of facts already on record, or to communicate new facts and discourses, and place those in a new light, which had been previously given. The former object would require that many particulars should be the same ; and the latter, that many should be different. The proportion of these might depend on several causes, but the simplest of them would be, the amount of testimony by which the events were confirmed already. Thus, in a second gospel, direct confirmation of the first would be the most prominent

object. In a third gospel, while it would still be an important end to confirm the two others, the design of completing their information by new incidents and discourses would naturally be much more prominent than before. In a fourth gospel, the second object would be likely to supersede the first almost entirely, and its chief character be the record of new particulars, unnoticed by the previous writers.

Such is precisely the relation of the four gospels to each other, as they now stand. The gospel of St. Mark contains very few facts, additional to St. Matthew, and is for the most part like a second witness of the same events. The discourses are abridged or omitted, while the narratives are confirmed with a greater fulness of connexion and detail. The gospel of St. Luke fulfils the same purpose with regard to both the others. It includes a large proportion of the facts in St. Matthew, and nearly all those which are peculiar to the second gospel. But then it also contains a large portion of distinct and original matter, amounting to nearly one half of the whole gospel. The principle is carried still further in the fourth and last gospel of St. John. Except the events of Passion Week, and the feeding of the five thousand, the whole is new and original history. This entire harmony between the natural design of four successive narratives, and the broad features of their mutual relation, as the gospels now stand, is a strong presumption that such was their real purpose, and that they are now placed in their true order of succession.

The nature of the agreement between a later and an earlier gospel, it follows from the same principle, will be most various, and baffle any technical scheme of explanation. In some cases, the second writer might content himself with adopting the statement of the first, either by transcription, or the indirect influence of an account which was already familiar. The relation, here, would resemble that of two copies from the same document. Sometimes he may record the same event more freely in his own language, and there will thus be an imperfect resemblance to two translations from the same original. Sometimes he may combine

two previous accounts, with selection and omission, to suit his own style of thought, or point of view ; and here there will be an appearance of compilation, but perplexed by anomalies, which no artificial or mechanical hypothesis can ever explain. At other times, fresh incidents will be introduced along with the main fact, and thus imply the distinct authority of the new record. Last of all, entirely new incidents will be given ; and, perhaps, for the sake of brevity, others omitted, and especially those which resemble them most nearly. Hence a series of half resemblances between similar events, differently placed, which will tempt the critic to a process of arbitrary dislocations, and complicate the whole problem of a gospel harmony.

All these characters actually appear in the four gospels. There are passages so much alike, that one seems a verbal copy of the other. There are resemblances verbally defective, but historically complete, which might suggest the theory of a double translation from the same document. There are compound resemblances, where the details of two gospels seem woven into one. There are imperfect correspondences, with omission, insertion, and transposition of incidents. Finally, there are duplicate events, occurring at widely different places in the narratives, but which wear a great resemblance to each other. A common Greek document would explain tolerably a few cases, a Syriac original, more imperfectly, several others, and there is so much diversity as might seem to justify the idea that the narratives were quite independent. But none of these views will explain the facts, as a whole. The agreements are so numerous and definite in the events, their arrangement, and even the phraseology, as to disprove their independence, and the verbal agreements are too partial and limited, for any common document or documents to account for the remaining diversity. Only the view above will explain the opposite features of resemblance and variety, which actually appear.

Let us now pursue the comparison, more in detail, through successive periods of our Lord's public ministry.

I. The Baptism of John (Matt. iii. Mark i. 1—11. Luke iii. 1—22) is the first subject for comparison. St. Mark has here compressed the account into one half the length of the two other gospels. A simple reason may be assigned, if we suppose him to have written under the direction of St. Peter, or with information derived from him. In this case he would naturally hasten to the point of time, where this testimony became available. Accordingly, the call of Simon meets us as early as the 16th verse of this gospel, and the events where he was present, and not all the Twelve, are given in it with peculiar fulness of description.

The features of St. Luke are those which mark the regular historian, in contrast with an eye-witness of the events. Thus the date of John's ministry is fixed by various references, so as to mark the time for general readers. His imprisonment by Herod is mentioned, before the writer passes on to the baptism of our Lord, and his public ministry. This is not the instinctive style of an eye-witness, but the reflective manner of a careful historian. He also specifies the age of our Lord at his baptism, and traces up his genealogy to Adam, so as to indicate his relation to the whole race of mankind, and not to the Jews alone.

The account of St. Matthew, on the contrary, seems intended for those who were familiar with the name of the Baptist, while the impression of his ministry still survived in great strength. "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea." The substance of his message is first given, and then its prophetic warrant, an order more vivid and graphic, but less historical, than that of St. Mark. Their resemblance, however, is very close, and implies that one of them knew the work of the other.

MATTHEW iii.

1. In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying,

2. Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

MARK i.

4. John did baptize in the wilderness and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

3. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias,

The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4. And the same John had his clothing of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

11. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear.

He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

13. Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

16. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway from the water:

And lo, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

And lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

2. As it is written in Esaias the prophet:

3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

6. And John was clothed with camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins: and he did eat locusts and wild honey.

And preached, saying, I indeed baptize you with water. There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

But he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

9. And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

And straightway coming up from the water,

he saw the heavens parted and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him.

And a voice came from heaven, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

The agreement here bespeaks a common origin, or a direct derivation of one account from the other, while an examination of the transpositions and minute changes will make it clear that St. Mark is the later Evangelist.

And first, since the gospel of St. Mark begins with John's ministry, the prophetic warrant of that ministry takes precedence of all the details, and the two prophecies, in Matt. iii. 3, xi. 10, are both placed in the forefront of the narrative. If the reading of Scholz and Griesbach be correct, the mention of Esaias is retained, although another prophecy from Malachi is inserted before the original quotation.

The next change is a consequence of the first. The title of the Baptist is changed into a direct assertion of the fact, which fulfilled the prophecy—‘ John did baptize in the wilderness.’ The description of John, and the effects of his ministry are transposed, which renders the order less dramatic and more historical. The warning to the Pharisees and Sadducees is omitted, but the testimony to the great dignity of Christ is retained, and a change in the order of the clauses results from that omission. Instead of the general expression, “from Galilee,” which is explained in Matthew by the former chapter, St. Mark, who has not the previous history, adds the specific statement, “from Nazareth of Galilee,” and records only the baptism itself, omitting the conversation between the Baptist and Jesus. Lastly, the account of the voice is less dramatic than in the narrative of the first gospel.

When the third gospel is compared with both the others, there are many signs that the writer was familiar with the first, and some indications of a correspondence with the second gospel. The first passage varies as follows :—

L. “ And he came into all the country about Jordan, (*M. L.*) preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. [*M.* For this is he that was spoken of by *M.* As it is written in *L.* As it is written in the book of the words of, Esaias the prophet] *M. M. L.* The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. *L.* Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”

Here one clause is verbally the same as in St. Mark. In the next there is a gradation. St. Matthew, writing for Jews, makes use of the colloquial form of quotation—“ This is he that was *spoken of.*” St. Mark, writing for others also, employs a stricter phrase—“as it is written.” St. Luke, for Gentiles less familiar with the prophets, gives a fuller description, “ in the book of the

words of Esaias the prophet," and also adds a further quotation, to shew the opening of a wide message of grace to the Gentiles, "And all flesh shall see the salvation of the Lord."

The next passage is slightly modified from St. Matthew.

M. "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said to them,

L. "Then said he to the multitudes that went forth to be baptized of him ;

M. L. "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come ? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance. And think not, (*L.* begin not) to say unto yourselves, We have Abraham to our father ; for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid to the root of the trees : therefore every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."

There is here an exact coincidence through seven or eight clauses, which clearly proves that one has used the very words of the other, either directly or in some common source. But the latter view is refuted by other facts, since the parts verbally alike are too few and too unconnected, to have formed a distinct document. Hence one is a recension of the other. The changes, though slight, prove that St. Luke's is the later gospel. The definite expression, "many of the Pharisees and Sadducees," is changed to another, more intelligible to Gentile converts, "the multitudes that went forth to be baptized ;" and, in the other case, a more exact replaces a more colloquial expression.

There follows next, in St. Luke, a supplement, which proves that the writer had immediate sources of knowledge, and did not merely borrow from the others, though he prefers sometimes to retain their very words. Then we have a statement of the views of the people, which gives new clearness and force to the saying repeated from the former gospels.

L. "And as the people were in expectation, and all men reasoned in their hearts concerning John, whether perhaps he himself were the Christ, John answered them all, saying,

M. M. L. "I indeed baptize you with water ; but there cometh one mightier than I, (*M. L.*) the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy (*M.* stooping down) to unloose. *M. L.* He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire ; whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner, but will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

Here there is an exact coincidence, first with both gospels, then with Mark in one clause, and Matthew in five others. An addition follows in St. Luke only, which makes this agreement more striking. "And many other things also, exhorting, he preached to the people."

Our Lord's baptism stands thus in the three gospels.

	And it came to pass in those days	And it came to pass, when all the people were baptized,
Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.	Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.	Jesus also being baptized, and praying,
And Jesus, when he was baptized went up straightway from the water.	And coming up straightway out of the water,	
And lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God, descending like a dove and lighting upon him.	he saw the heavens parted and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him.	That the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily shape, like a dove, upon him ;
And lo, a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.	And there came a voice from heaven, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.	And that a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.

The resemblance of St. Matthew and St. Mark is here very striking. Nazareth is mentioned by the latter, because the previous history of our Lord's residence is not given, and a

distinct allusion to it was natural in the first appearance of the Messiah. The other slight changes, besides the omission of the dialogue, render the account less dramatic, and more historical, and thus imply a later composition. The form is still more historical in St. Luke. The indirect construction removes it further from the tone and colouring of an eye-witness. The prayer of Jesus is a fresh incident, and a mark of independent information. The rest is verbally the same, either with St. Matthew or St. Mark, except the one change from direct to indirect narrative. There is thus a plain presumption that the writer simply recast the previous accounts of the baptism, to suit the style of his own history.

II. The History of the Temptation is given in brief by St. Mark, and more fully by St. Matthew and St. Luke. The chief difference is in the arrangement of the second and third temptations. If we were to judge from the connectives alone, St. Matthew would seem to give the true order. But there are several reasons for an opposite view. The three kinds of temptation are the same which appear in the history of the Fall, Gen. iii. 6, and in the statement of St. John, (1 John ii. 16,) and in both of these the order is the same as in St. Luke, and the pride of life occupies the third place. This is also clearly the most subtle and dangerous temptation, and therefore is likely to have been the last. The prominence, also, given in St. Matthew to the kingly office of our Lord, would explain a departure from the actual order. The connective, *τοτε*, is often used by him for a sequence not immediate, and the word *παλιν* may refer to the narrative, rather than the action, and signify merely a further incident to be recorded, without fixing its succession. It seems then, on the whole, at least not improbable that the third gospel has restored the true order. The two accounts, in other respects, are as follows :—

Then was Jesus led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

And having fasted forty days and forty nights, he afterwards hungered.

And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God command that these stones be made loaves.

But he answered and said, It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word proceeding out of the mouth of God.

Again, the devil taketh him up into a very high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them,

And saith to him, All these will I give thee,

if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan,

For it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Then the devil taketh him into the holy city, and setteth him on the pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him,

If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down;

For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee,

And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest ever thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

And Jesus, being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil.

And in those days he ate nothing; and when they were ended, he afterwards hungered.

And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone, that it be made a loaf.

And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

And the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the habitable world in a moment of time.

And the devil said to him, All this power will I give thee and the glory of them; for it is delivered to me, and to whom I will I give it.

If thou therefore wilt worship before me all shall be thine.

And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan,

For it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him,

If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence;

For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee,

And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest ever thou dash thy foot against a stone.

And Jesus answering, said to him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Then the devil leaveth him, and lo, angels come and minister to him.		And the devil, having ended every temptation, departed from him for a season.
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Here the brief expression, "having fasted forty days," &c. is replaced by a paraphrase in St. Luke. The present tense is exchanged throughout for the past, which suits a more distant narrator. The phrase, Matt. iv. 4, which might be perverted by Gentile readers, and lower their conception of the true God to a resemblance of false divinities, is altered to a simpler expression. Instead of *κόσμος*, we find the more classical term, or *οικουμένη*, and the temptation is exhibited more fully, so that its apparent grossness is removed, and the tempter is seen to have asked only for a subordinate homage, as a permitted viceroy of the Almighty. Lastly, instead of "the holy city," a title natural in the lips of a Jew, writing for Jews at an earlier date, we have the simple name, Jerusalem. The closing sentence, in St. Luke, is also less dramatic, and has the tone of connected history, since it plainly refers to the time of the agony and the crucifixion. With these exceptions the agreement is so full and close, as almost to require the admission that one writer knew the account of the other. The variations cannot be explained, either by a common Greek nor Hebrew document, but are accounted for simply by the point of view in each writer. St. Matthew is more dramatic and idiomatic; while the third gospel is more classical in style, and more historical in its tone. The brief account in St. Mark, by its last clause, shews its closer relation to the account in St. Matthew.

III. The opening of the ministry in Galilee is thus stated in the three gospels :—

Matt. iv. 12—17. "Now when Jesus heard that John was given up, he departed into Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt by Capernaum, by the sea coast, &c. &c. From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Mark i. 14, 15. Now when John was given up, Jesus came

into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe the gospel."

Luke iv. 14—31. "And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about ; and he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, &c. &c. And he came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the Sabbath-days."

Here, in the two former gospels, the brief allusion to St. John's imprisonment, which has not been mentioned, implies that they wrote for a class of readers to whom it was familiarly known. St. Luke, on the contrary, has briefly mentioned it before, in its natural place, at the close of John's public ministry. We have here, then, a sign of the early date of the two first gospels, or of their adaptation to readers in Palestine.

The next difference in St. Mark, the omission of Nazareth, is very soon explained. He had not mentioned the long residence of Jesus in that city, and it was therefore needless to specify his removal from it. But his use of the word, *gospel*, absolutely, for the doctrine of Christ, of which there is no example in St. Matthew, is a clear sign that he wrote at a later period.

The quotation from Isaiah, in the first gospel, is another striking feature. Thirteen instances are found in St. Matthew, where the writer himself points out the fulfilment of prophecy, two only in St. Mark, and one solitary instance in St. Luke. This is a proof that St. Matthew wrote more directly for Jewish readers, and a presumption that his gospel was early, while Jewish converts were the main body of the Church of Christ.

St. Luke, again, evidently supplies an hiatus in the first gospel. We were there told that Jesus left Nazareth, but no reason for the removal, and no account of its circumstances, was given. The third gospel sets these before us, and shews us why he forsook the home of his early years, and chose another centre

for his public ministry. The supplementary character is here very apparent.

The two descriptions of Capernaum are equally instructive, as to the special purpose of each gospel. The phrase "Capernaum, which is by the sea," could be appropriate only in one whose home was near the lake of Tiberias, when writing for the dwellers in Palestine. On the contrary, "Capernaum, a city of Galilee," is just as clear a token that the writer was addressing a circle of readers out of Palestine, and little acquainted with the minuter features of its geography.

IV. The Call of the Four Disciples, compared with the Miraculous Draught, Luke v. 1—11, is the next subject of comparison, and has occasioned a great division of judgment. Most recent critics, as Neander, Olshausen, Wieseler and Robinson, affirm the event to be the same, but others, as Mr. Greswell, believe them successive and distinct. The decision of this point has an important bearing on the mutual relation of the three gospels, and especially on that of St. Luke to the two others.

The features of contrast are thus stated by Mr. Greswell. In one case, Jesus was walking by the shore; in the other, he was standing by the lake, and purposing to teach the people. In one, he never quitted the land; in the other, he put out to sea. In one, the ships were seen on the sea, in the other, drawn up on the shore; in one, apart, in the other, close together. In one case, Simon and Andrew were first seen in one ship, and then James and John in theirs; in the other, both ships were empty, and the fishers had left them. In one, Andrew and Simon were letting down their net, and James and John preparing to do the same; in the other, all were washing their nets together. In one, Simon and Andrew were first called by themselves, then, after an interval, the others; in the second account, all were seen and called together. In one, the call was from the land, in the other, from the midst of the sea, and the words used were quite distinct. In one, they forsook only their nets and ship, in the other, they abandoned the large capture of fishes also. In

one case, they were invited to follow Jesus, in the other, they did so, under the impression of the miracle, of their own accord.

To remove these contradictions, several suppositions have been made ; that Jesus was first walking by the lake, and then, in consequence of the throng, entered the ship of Simon ; that the miraculous draught followed, and afterwards the call took place, while Simon and Andrew were washing their nets after the draught, and James and John were repairing that which was broken. But besides the wide departure from the natural meaning of St. Matthew's words, the difficulties that remain appear insuperable. It is clear from St. Luke that the words of Jesus to Simon were spoken in the ship, while the impression of the miracle was deepest, and the four disciples were present together. In the other account, Jesus walks some distance along the shore, after the call of Simon and Andrew, before he speaks to the sons of Zebedee. We have thus to assume that he left the ship, after the miracle, and Simon and Andrew stayed in it, washing one of their nets ; that James and John withdrew from their partners to some distance, taking Simon's net which was broken, and set about repairing it ; and that last of all, our Lord returned after a short absence, and called first Simon and Andrew, and then James and John, from their unseasonable employment. The significance and beauty of each narrative is thus completely destroyed. The deep impression of the miracle would have disappeared, as soon as it was wrought ; while the power of a simple call from Jesus, and the prompt obedience of the disciples, is converted into a tardy compliance with his injunctions, after an unnatural and unseemly delay. For St. Mark has told us that hired servants were present in one of the ships, so that there could be no need, on the lowest view, for Simon and Andrew to wash one net, and for James and John to repair the other. We have the further incongruity, that the net and ship were Simon's, and one only employed ; while the sons of Zebedee must be supposed to have carried it away with them, in

order to repair it. The solution, then, is quite incredible and untrue.

The difficulties, on the other hypothesis, may be easily removed. The first is drawn from the fact, that each gospel records only one such call of the Four Apostles by the lake of Galilee. But there are many instances, in the gospels, of two similar events, where the same Evangelist records one only. This Miraculous Draught is itself a case in point, since another is reported in the fourth gospel, which greatly resembled it, and still is quite distinct in time, being after the resurrection, and in many other circumstances. St. John, also, records another call of these same Apostles, earlier than the one by the sea of Galilee.

The nearness of the two events in time, if not the same, has been further held a proof of their identity. The transposition, in St. Luke, would be only through twelve verses. The real question, however, is of the historical interval, and not of the number of verses in which intervening events are described. According to all the three gospels, a circuit of Galilee came between them, besides the first public opening of the ministry at Capernaum. Hence, on the shortest view of its length, the distance between them would be two or three months. But since only the cure of the leper and the paralytic, the call of Levi, and the feast in his house, are recorded by St. Mark and St. Luke before the second Passover, it is clearly quite possible, from these dates alone, that the interval might be six or seven months, and quite enough to render the second call natural and consistent.

It is further objected that the Apostles, after the first call, would never return so soon to their usual occupation. But the statement in the fourth gospel removes this objection also. That call, we there see, was not the first beginning of their discipleship, and after attending Jesus some time, they had returned to their usual occupation. Even after the resurrection, they are found once again, while waiting for the appearance of their

Lord, still employing themselves as fishermen. Having, then, accompanied our Lord throughout his first circuit of Galilee, they might naturally feel at liberty to do the same, on his return to Capernaum, their own home, until he summoned them for another journey. And since their first call was without a miracle, they might understand very imperfectly the purpose of the invitation. After the miraculous draught they would begin to see its full import, and attach themselves permanently to their Lord through the rest of His ministry.

There are other indications, in the two accounts, that they refer to distinct events. It has been shewn how carefully St. Mark has restored the true order, when St. Matthew had departed from it, and hence we may infer that the call, in those gospels, is in its true place. But the miraculous draught was occasioned by the crowds who pressed on our Lord. This might naturally occur at the close of a first circuit of Galilee, but is hardly probable, before his public teaching at Capernaum had begun. The cure of Simon's wife's mother has been mentioned by St. Luke before, and hence he cannot intend the narrative to be that of his first introduction to Jesus, which, as we know also from St. John, was much earlier. Indeed the name, *ἐπιστάτα*, Master, is a clear sign that he was already a disciple. St. Luke adheres so regularly, in this part, to the order of St. Mark, that there is no reason why he should here forsake it, if he purposed to describe the same event. It might just as easily have been given in the right order, at iv. 31. The call, again, seems to have been in an evening, when the fishing was just begun, while the other event was plainly in the morning, after the night's toil was over. The words "casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers," cannot without violence be expounded "washing their nets, because they were abandoning their occupation for ever." The words of our Lord, after the miracle, seem also to imply that it was later in time than the call in St. Matthew. "Follow me, and I will make you to become fishers of men," was simply a promise to fit and prepare them for a higher office. But the

words "Fear not, from this time thou shalt be capturing men," is a further promise, of success in a work for which He had already prepared them. The contrast is just the same as between the act of casting a net, uncertain of the result, and the spectacle of a large draught of fishes, actually secured.

The distinctness of the two events being established, important inferences will follow. St. Matthew and St. Mark, who relate the original call, must have been earlier than St. Luke, who passes it by, to record a later event of a similar nature; just as the fourth gospel, which was plainly later still, passes by the miraculous draught here mentioned, and recounts another, which took place after the resurrection. Next, we have here a sign that the writer of the third gospel had access to direct and original sources of information. No common document can here help in the least to explain the relation of the three gospels. Further, we have a proof that the Evangelist used a principle of wise selection, and purposely avoided introducing too many events, closely resembling each other, even when aware of their actual occurrence. These maxims are fully confirmed by other examples, that will appear later in the narrative.

V. The dispossession in Capernaum is not given by St. Matthew, but is found in both St. Mark and St. Luke. Mark i. 21—28. Luke iv. 31—37.

MARK i. 21—28.

And they enter into Capernaum, and straightway on the Sabbath he entered into the synagogue and taught.

And they were astonished at his doctrine; for he was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, saying,

Let alone; what have we to do with thee, Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come

LUKE iv. 31—37.

And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbath-days.

And they were astonished at his doctrine; for his word was with power.

And in the synagogue there was a man having a spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice; saying,

Let alone; what have we to do with thee, Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come

to destroy us? I know thee, who thou art, the Holy One of God!

And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

And the unclean spirit having torn him, and having cried with a loud voice, came out of him.

And they were all amazed, so as to question among themselves, saying;

What is this? what new doctrine is this? that with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.

And his fame went forth immediately into all the neighbouring districts of Galilee.

to destroy us? I know thee, who thou art, the Holy One of God!

And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

And the devil, having thrown him in the midst, came out of him, and hurt him not.

And there was amazement upon them all, and they spoke together among themselves, saying;

What a word is this! that with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they go out.

And a rumour concerning him went forth into every place of the neighbouring country.

Here the resemblance is so close as almost to prove that one writer has adopted the narrative of the other, with a few alterations of style. And there are several indications that St. Luke has revised St. Mark's narrative, and not the reverse. Its introduction, in the second gospel, is simply explained by the reasons already given. When the cure of Simon's mother-in-law was restored to its true place, it was natural to supply the intermediate link, which connected it with the call of the disciples. Again, the third gospel, if one purpose of it were to confirm the authority of both its predecessors, would naturally repeat most of the few incidents which were peculiar to the second. But the slight variations equally imply the order of two narratives. Capernaum is described by St. Luke as a city of Galilee, which shews that he wrote for readers beyond the limits of Palestine. The verse, Mark i. 22, is verbally the same as Matt. viii. 28, 29, and when the Sermon was omitted, is transferred to its fittest place, at the first public exercise of our Lord's ministry. In St. Luke the allusion to the Scribes is omitted, as less adapted to the Gentile readers. The fuller phrase, "a spirit of an unclean demon," seems designed to meet the classic usage, in which *demon* is used ambiguously, either for a good or an evil

power. The other variations are also explained by the tendency in the writer of the third gospel to a style more purely Greek and classical than that of the two other Evangelists.

VI. The account of the cures, Matt. viii. 14—17 ; Mark i. 29—39 ; Luke iv. 38—44 yields another proof of the connexion of the three gospels, and of their relative order. The record in St. Matthew is very brief. In St. Mark nearly every phrase is retained, but many other particulars are given. The whole description is also that of an eye-witness, and the succession of events is clearly determined, the cure in the house, the cures after sunset, when the Sabbath was over, and the departure from prayer early in the morning, followed by a circuit of Galilee. The verbal resemblance is close—*ελθων εις την οικιαν Πετρου—ηλθεν εις την οικιαν Σιμωνος—ειδε την πενθεραν αυτου, πυρεσσουσαν—η πενθερα Σιμωνος κατεκειτο πυρέσσουσα—ηψατο της χειρος αυτης—κρατησας της χειρος αυτης—ηγερθη—ηγείρεν αυτην—και διηκονει αυτοις—και διηκονει αυτοις Οφιας δε γενομενης—παντας τους κακως εχοντας—δαιμονιζομενους—εθεραπενυσε—εξεβαλε*. But St. Mark alone mentions that the house was that of Andrew, as well as Simon, that James and John were present, that the disciples requested Jesus to effect the cure, and that after sunset, the whole city were gathered at the door ; while the subsequent retirement for prayer, and its immediate result in the first circuit, are entirely additional. St. Matthew had not stated that the sick were brought to Jesus, as well as the possessed, but simply implies it by his mention of both alike as cured. St. Mark has supplied this omission, and tells us that both were brought, and both were healed.

St. Luke, again, retains the additional facts of St. Mark, except those which are most dramatic, and least essential to the history,—the presence of James and John, and the crowding of the whole city to the door. But the phraseology is greatly modified, and most of the terms which are common to the former gospels are here replaced by others. For *ηλθον*, or *ελθων*, we have *εισηλθεν* ; for *πυρεσσουσα*, *κατεχομενη πυρετω μεγαλω* ; for *οφιας γενομενης*, *δυνοντος του ηλιου* ; for *παντας τους κακως εχοντας*, *παντες*

ἴσοι εἶχον ἀσθενούντας νοσοῖς ποικίλοις ; for ἐξεβαλε πνευματα, ἐξηρχετο δαιμονια. The transition, in some clauses, is evident. Thus St. Matthew fixes the time of the cures, “when the even was come,” οφίας δε γενομένης. St. Mark retains the phrase, and adds another to explain it more fully, when the sun did set, ὅτε εδυ ὁ ἥλιος. St. Luke retains only the second, and puts it in a more classical form, δυνοντος δε του ἡλιου.

In the added particulars, while St. Luke adheres closely to the substance and order of St. Mark's statements, the language is freely changed, and rendered more classical. The brief expression, “because they knew him,” is simply expounded, “because they knew him to be the Christ.” The provincial phrase, πρωι εννυχον λιαν, is also replaced by another of pure Greek usage, “γενομένης ἡμέρας,” or “when the day broke.” This difference is very observable in Mark i. 38, and Luke iv. 43, 44, where a somewhat harsh and idiomatic is changed into an elegant and classical phraseology.

VII. The Cure of the Leper, Matt. viii. 2—4. Mark i. 40—44, Luke v. 12—14, exhibits signs of the connexion and order of the three narratives. That of St. Matthew is brief and simple in the extreme. St. Mark has added graphic details, and noticed the historical result. The worship, Matt. viii. 2, is expounded by its visible features, “entreating him, and falling on his knees before him.” The charge is described more fully. “He strictly charged him, and forthwith sent him away.” The speediness of the cure is further noted by the clause “as soon as he had spoken,” and the motives of Jesus by a single word, “moved with compassion.” The briefer phrase in St. Matthew, “his leprosy was cleansed,” is given more fully. “His leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed ;” while the gift receives a similar paraphrase. “Offer for thy cleansing what Moses appointed.” The language, in most other respects, is verbally the same.

St. Luke has retained the chief additions of St. Mark, but abridged his narrative, and adopted a more historical and classical

style. He begins with the general description of the place, where the cure was wrought. "It came to pass, when he was in a certain city." The description of the leper becomes "a man full of leprosy." The worship of St. Matthew, and the peculiar term of St. Mark, *γυνυπετων*, are replaced by the classic idiom, "he fell upon his face." The words of the request, and the reply, are the same in all the writers; but the account of the parting charge is more gracefully blended with the words themselves, by passing from the indirect to the direct construction. The explanatory words, "for thy cleansing," are retained. The final statement, while the same in substance as that of St. Mark, has clearly been moulded from a more dramatic, into a more historical form.

K. But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter; so that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places; and they came to him from every quarter.

L. But there went abroad the more a fame concerning him; and great multitudes came together to hear and to be healed by him of their infirmities; but he kept retiring in desert places, and praying.

VIII. The Healing of the Paralytic is a still more striking proof of the relation which connects these three gospels. The short account of St. Matthew is plainly the basis of the two others, and St. Luke has modified slightly the fuller narrative of the second gospel.

M. "And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, laid upon a couch. And Jesus, seeing their faith, said to the paralytic, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. And behold, certain of the Scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, Why do ye think evil things in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, Thy sins are forgiven; or to say, Arise and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then he saith to the paralytic,) Arise, take up thy couch, and go to thine house. And he arose and went to his house.

But when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, who had given such power to men."

K. And straightway many were gathered together, so that there was no room to receive them, even at the door, and he preached the word to them.

And they came unto him, bringing a paralytic, carried by four men.

And being not able to draw near to him for the crowd, they uncovered the roof, where he was, and having broken it, let down the couch on which the paralytic was laid.

But when Jesus saw their faith, he saith to the paralytic, Son, thy sins are forgiven thee.

But there were some of the Scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,

Why doth he thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?

And immediately Jesus perceiving in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, said to them,

Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

Whether is it easier to say to the paralytic, Thy sins are forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed and walk?

But that ye may know the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the paralytic,)

I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go thy way into thine house.

L. And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and lawyers sitting by, who were come out of every town of Galilee and Jordan and Jerusalem, and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.

And behold, men brought in a bed a man who was palsied, and they sought to bring him in, and set him before him.

And not finding how they could bring him in for the crowd, climbing upon the house, they let him down through the tiles, with his little couch, into the midst before Jesus.

And when he saw their faith, he said to him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

And the Scribes and Pharisees began to reason, saying,

Who is this that speaketh blasphemies? who can forgive sins, but God only?

And Jesus perceiving their reasonings, answered and said to them,

Why reason ye in your hearts?

Whether is it easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?

But that ye may know the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he said to the palsied,)

I tell thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go thy way into thy house.

And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all.

So that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it in this fashion.

And immediately he arose before them, took up that on which he lay, and went to his house, glorifying God.

And amazement seized on all, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to-day.

The shorter account of St. Matthew is much amplified in the two other gospels. On the other hand, these agree in all the main particulars, but St. Luke omits the minuter details of St. Mark, and gives the whole a more complete and historical form. The opening verses are a picture in the one, such as an eye-witness might supply; in the other, a comprehensive statement of the circumstances, most important for the general reader to understand, that he might see the scope of the narrative. The words of our Lord are almost verbally the same in all the three writers. The last verses in St. Luke are variations of those in St. Mark, and differ from them chiefly by a more classical tone. Every feature is satisfied by the hypothesis, that St. Mark has amplified St. Matthew, and that St. Luke has adopted in the main St. Mark's fuller account, but moulded it into a style and form, adapted for Greek readers and for general history.

IX. The call of Levi or Matthew is placed, in each gospel, after the cure of the Paralytic, and throws light on their connexion. It is given by them as follows, where the translation adheres closely to the form of the original.

M. "And Jesus, passing by from thence, saw a man sitting at the place of custom, called Matthew, and saith to him, Follow me; and he arose and followed him.

"And it came to pass, as he sat at meat in his house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat at meat along with Jesus and his disciples."

K. "And he went forth again by the sea; and all the multitude came to him, and he taught them.

"And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus, sitting

at the place of custom, and saith to him, Follow me ; and he arose and followed him.

“And it came to pass, as he sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat at meat along with Jesus and his disciples ; for there were many, and they followed him.”

L. “And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, by name Levi, sitting at the place of custom, and said to him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed him.

“And Levi made him a great feast in his own house ; and there was a great multitude of publicans and others, who were set at meat with them.”

The phrase in Matthew, “passing by,” is retained by Mark, who gives a fuller description of the circumstances of the call. St. Luke omits the phrase of St. Matthew, and several details of St. Mark, but adopts from him the sequence “after these things,” the expression “he went forth,” the name, “Levi,” instead of Matthew, and the order of its introduction, before and not after the place where the call occurred. No other arrangement of the narrative will account so well for their slight variations. Again, the place of the entertainment is clearer in St. Mark than in St. Matthew, and in St. Luke than in either. That it was a special feast, given by the publican in gratitude to our Lord after his call, appears in this gospel only. There is thus a plain mark of their relative succession, and that the later Evangelist has rendered the statement of the earlier more conspicuous for general readers.

The change of the name, which has led some to a most unreasonable theory, that two different persons were meant, admits of a satisfactory solution. St. Matthew tacitly marks his own authorship, by the modest addition he makes in the list of the Apostles—Matthew the publican. The two others drop this humbling epithet, and place his name before that of Thomas in their lists. This account of his call, in the first gospel, fixes the reader’s attention strongly on the nature of the Apostle’s former occupation. The other Evangelists, by mentioning him

here under another name, leave him to be the sole informant of the church respecting a fact odious and humiliating to Jewish ears. This moral delicacy, on their part, is the exact counterpart of the humility which the Apostle displays in his own statements; and it implies that their narratives were designed in their use by the church at large, to be supplementary to the first gospel.

The words of St. Mark seem to imply that Levi was the usual name of the Apostle at the time of his call. Its displacement afterwards, by another, has an exact parallel in "Lebbeus, surnamed Thaddeus," whom St. Luke calls Judas, and St. John, "Judas, not Iscariot," where no trace of his former name appears. It seems that St. Mark, or his authority, knew Levi familiarly under that name before his call, and Peter would certainly know the name of the tax-gatherer at the place of custom near Capernaum.

X. The Discourse in the Publican's house is a striking instance of the verbal correspondence between all the three gospels, and a disproof of their absolute independence.

MATTHEW.

And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to his disciples,

Why doth your master eat with publicans and sinners?

But when Jesus heard, he said to them, The whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick.

But go and learn what it meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.

For I came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

MARK.

And when the Scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples.

How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

And when Jesus heard, he saith to them, The whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick.

I came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

LUKE.

But the Scribes and Pharisees of them murmured against his disciples, saying,

Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

And Jesus answering, said unto them, The whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick.

I came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the pharisees fast often, but thy disciples fast not ?

And Jesus said to them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, while the bridegroom is with them ?

But days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then will they fast.

But no man putteth a piece of unwrought cloth on an old garment.

For its filling up taketh from the garment, and a worse rent is made.

Nor do they put new wine into old bottles.

But if not, the bottles burst, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles perish.

But they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast.

And they come to say to him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not.

And Jesus said to them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them ?

As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

But days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then will they fast in that day.

And no man seweth a piece of unwrought cloth on an old garment.

But if not, its new filling up taketh from the old, and a worse rent is made.

And no one putteth new wine into old bottles.

But if not, the new wine bursts the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles perish.

But new wine must be put into new bottles.

And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and also of the Pharisees, but thine eat and drink ?

And he said to them, Can ye make the children of the bride fast, while the bridegroom is with them ?

But days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then will they fast in those days.

And he spake also a parable unto them.

No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old.

But if not, both it cuts up the new, and the piece from the new agreeth not with the old.

And no one putteth new wine into old bottles.

But if not, the new wine will burst the bottles, and itself will be spilled, and the bottles will perish.

But new wine must be put into new bottles, and both are preserved.

And no one having drunk old, at once desires new, for he saith, The old is better.

Amidst the close resemblance, amounting almost to identity, in the three narratives, the variations illustrate their mutual relation, and their successive order of composition.

The murmuring, in St. Matthew, is against our Lord himself, "Why eateth your Master &c.?" In St. Mark, less explicitly, "How it is that he eateth and drinketh &c.?" In St. Luke, against the disciples, "Why do ye eat and drink, &c.?" It is probable that the last was the actual form of expression, but this implied a direct charge against our Lord himself, and St. Matthew records the inquiry in its spirit, rather than its precise words. In St. Mark this difference is made less prominent, and in St. Luke the direct words of the inquiry are restored. Our Lord then replies to the charge insinuated, rather than expressed, and justifies his own conduct as the Physician of souls. The quotation in St. Matthew is omitted in the two other gospels, as this appeal to the prophets is the distinctive feature of a narrative, designed more expressly for Jewish readers. The rest of the answer is verbally the same, in all the three writers. The opening of the next passage exhibits a slight variation. If we suppose that some one or more of John's disciples put the question to Jesus, in the words given by St. Mark, the difference may be simply explained. St. Matthew modifies the phrase from his own knowledge of the parties, "Why do *we*," &c. St. Mark gives the words more accurately, and prefixes a short explanation of the circumstances. St. Luke gives the inquiry from St. Mark, slightly paraphrased, so as to dispense with his formal explanation. The word, *mourn*, which St. Matthew has introduced, as expressing the scope and spirit of our Lord's remark, is replaced in the other gospels by the exact phrase, which it is probable that our Lord would employ. The parable exhibits a close verbal agreement between Matthew and Mark, and in their slight variations St. Luke adheres sometimes to one, and sometimes to the other; while in the precise form of the illustration he varies from both, and adds a further parable in the closing verse, which, even where he copies so closely the

phraseology of his predecessors, reminds us of his distinct and independent authority.

There are thus, in every part of these chapters, clear signs that the Evangelists were not independent of each other, but that St. Mark freely made use of St. Matthew, and St. Luke of both the previous gospels ; while the evidence is equally full and strong, that the later did not merely copy from the earlier, but moulded their narrative with reference to a definite purpose of their own, enriching it with fresh details, and a great variety of original information.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE RELATIVE ORDER OF THE GOSPELS.

FROM THE SECOND PASSOVER TO THE TRANSFIGURATION.

THE second main division of the history, with reference to the structure of the gospels, is that which commences at the passage through the Corn-fields, and ends with the Transfiguration, or more exactly, with the discourse which followed not long after at Capernaum. The third gospel, after this point, diverges from the two others through nine chapters, and proceeds alone. The comparison of the three narratives, in this second portion, leads to the same results as before ; but its extent will render it needful to select some particulars only.

I. The passages to be first compared are Matt. xii. 1—21. Mark i. 23—ii. 19. Luke vi. 1—18, which include the discourse on the Sabbath, the cure of the withered hand, and the Ordination of the Apostles.

The opening words, in St. Matthew, are general. "At that time Jesus went on the sabbath through the corn-fields." It seems to imply a time not very distant from the Baptist's message, in chap. xi. St. Mark does not report that message, and states the time more generally. St. Luke places the message of John not much later, and adds here a peculiar note of time, "It came to pass on a second-first sabbath." The meaning is probably, the first of the seven numbered Sabbaths, after the morrow of the sabbath in the Passover feast. St. Luke has thus added another of those notes of time, which prove the

orderly nature of his gospel, and places the event at the opening of the second year in our Lord's ministry. St. Mark has restored the order of time, which was neglected by St. Matthew, and St. Luke has added a fuller indication of the real date.

The mention of the shewbread also indicates the order of the gospels, by a very slight change.

M. And did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them that were with him, but for the priests alone.

K. And did eat the shewbread, which it is not lawful to eat, but for the priests, and gave also to them that were with him.

L. And took the shewbread and ate, and gave also to them that were with him, which it is not lawful to eat, but only for the priests.

St. Matthew implies, but does not clearly affirm, that the companions ate the shewbread, as well as David. St. Mark states it more clearly, but adds it as a supplement at the close. St. Luke adopts his words, but transfers them to their natural place in deliberate history, before the legal prohibition is given.

The allusion to the temple, and the quotation from Hosea, are both peculiar to St. Matthew, and are another sign that his gospel was intended specially for the Jews. The answer, abridged by St. Mark, is still further abridged in the third gospel.

In the cure which follows, St. Luke's account has several traces of its later composition. He states from the first, what the others leave to be inferred from the narrative, that it took place on a sabbath; and instead of the phrase in St. Mark, "that they might accuse him," gives another, more explicit and classical, "that they might find an accusation against him." The last sentence vi. 11, differs from both the other gospels, by omitting all allusion to the Jewish parties, and by the classical elegance of the whole phrase.

In the verses that follow, St. Matthew states briefly the retirement of Jesus, the healing of the multitudes, the charge of silence imposed on them, and the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy, which he quotes in the Jewish form, "which was *spoken* by Esaias the prophet," xii. 17—21. St. Mark omits the pro-

phcey, but gives many other details ; that Jesus withdrew with his disciples, to the sea of Galilee, that the multitudes came from Jerusalem, Idumea and Perea, and even from Tyre and Sidon, that he ordered a small vessel to wait on him, that the diseased pressed on him, to touch him, and that many dispossessions took place at the same time. In St. Matthew the Mission of the Twelve is anticipated, for a special purpose, and their ordination is merely alluded to, as already past. St. Mark has here restored it to its true place, which he fixes by the previous ascent into the mountain, and the entrance afterwards into the house—two particulars that imply an exact and full knowledge of the event. In Matthew, Simon is called the first ; but in Mark's gospel, as writing under Peter's own direction, this honour is merely implied, and not openly expressed, and the distinction of his surname is made less conspicuous, by mention of the common title given to the sons of Zebedee. Matthew is named before Thomas, the title of publican is omitted, and the name Lebbeus is replaced by Thaddeus, which in Matthew is simply a surname.

St. Luke, again, having confirmed the order of the two others, in the passage through the corn-fields and the cure of the withered hand, omits the third event, which they have in common, and confirms St. Mark, where he stood alone, in the ascent into the mountain, and the place and time of the Apostle's Ordination. Yet his account is too distinct to have been borrowed from the other. The surname of Simon the Canaanite is given in its Greek form. Thaddeus is called Judas, as he is still later by St. John. He is called the brother of James (for that is certainly the true, as well as the usual supplement) ; and this implies that James the Less had become more prominent in the church, when St. Luke wrote, than at the date of the two other gospels. All these minute features confirm the true place of his narrative, as the third in order of time.

II. The Sermon in St. Luke, compared with the one in St. Matthew, is the next subject for inquiry. Most recent critics,

as Neander, Olshausen, Wieseler, and Robinson, view them as the same. Neander remarks further, that if Luke vi. 13, is meant to recite the choosing of the Apostles, it is clearly not in chronological order. But if the Evangelist be a credible witness, the very reverse is perfectly clear. No sentence could be framed so as to mark an immediate sequence more evidently, and a comparison of the whole context with the two other gospels proves decisively the regularity of this whole chapter of St. Luke.

The following reasons are given for the identity. The choice of the Twelve was a fit occasion for the discourse in St. Matthew, and the passages Matt. v. 13, 14—vii. 6, seem to allude to their appointment. The beginning and end of the sermon, and the general course of thought, are the same in both gospels. The entrance into Capernaum follows in each case, and the cure of the centurion's servant. Two opposite explanations are also proposed of the difference between them. Some have thought that St. Luke omits the exposition of the Mosaic law, as less suitable to Gentile converts; while others suppose that Matthew has grouped together many sayings, that were really uttered at other times, and which St. Luke has given elsewhere in their true place. The expression "on the plain" should rather be translated "on a level spot," and hence the contrast in the place where the discourse was spoken, disappears; since that spot might be on the mountain side. For these reasons the more general opinion of recent critics has been, that we have two reports of the same discourse, and that St. Luke has given it in its true order.

The following reasons may be offered for the opposite view, which maintains the distinctness of the two sermons. First, there is nothing improbable in the recurrence of similar discourses in our Lord's ministry. On the contrary, a partial repetition, in many cases, is morally certain. Almost every day, for three years, was employed in teaching his disciples or the multitudes. His journeys had a wide circuit, through hundreds of towns or villages, and the hearers must have been often changing. Three

or four circuits of Galilee are expressly named in the gospels. Many shorter sayings are repeated, even in the same gospel, and still more, when different gospels are compared together. Hence the same principle may well apply to longer discourses, if many of the hearers were different, and a considerable time had intervened.

The sermon in St. Luke is clearly in its true place, and the question is whether the account in St. Matthew be an anticipation of the real time. In this case, St. Matthew will have passed over more than a year of our Saviour's ministry, without recording more than one fact, the call of the four disciples, and the general remark, that Jesus made a circuit through Galilee. This seems very improbable.

The context, in the first gospel, seems to place the discourse at the close of a first circuit of Galilee. No time could be more suitable for a formal and open proclamation of our Lord's doctrine, and of its relation to the law of Moses and the prophets. On the contrary, such an explanation would come very late, when the second Passover had been past for some time, and our Lord had completed more than a whole year of his public ministry.

The arrangement, also, as it now stands, seems to be confirmed by the two other gospels. After the return to Galilee in all, the visit to Nazareth in Luke only, and the removal to Capernaum, we have this succession:—

<i>M.</i> Call of the Four Disciples.	<i>K.</i> Call of the Four Disciples.	<i>L.</i> Dispossession at Capernaum.
	Dispossession at Capernaum.	Simon's wife's mother, &c.
Circuit of Galilee.	Simon's wife's mother, &c.	Circuit of Galilee, and preaching.
Sermon on the Mount.	Circuit of Galilee, and preaching.	Miraculous Draught.
The Leper cleansed.	The Leper cleansed.	The Leper cleansed.

Thus the events before and after will refer the Sermon to a much earlier place than the one in St. Luke, and which would

answer to Mark i. 29; Luke iv. 44, in the two other gospels. The astonishment of the multitudes at the close, also confirms this earlier date. We find its counterpart in Mark i. 22; Luke iv. 32, after the first instance of public teaching at Capernaum. If the Sermon belonged really to the first circuit of Galilee, the remark would be far more appropriate than if upwards of a year had now passed from the opening of our Lord's ministry.

The resemblance in the occasion of each discourse will not prove them the same, though each were given on the side of the mountain, near Capernaum. The natural impression left by the two accounts is different. In one case, our Lord seems to have retired, simply to avoid the pressure of the multitude. Having seated himself in a convenient place, his disciples drew near, and the rest stood at a greater distance, while he taught them. In St. Luke the whole night had been spent in the mountain; the disciples drew near at day-break, and the Twelve were chosen. Our Lord then came down to a lower and level place, and addressed his disciples, standing, in audience of the multitude. The discourse in St. Matthew is three times as long as in St. Luke; and it is clear that the posture of sitting and standing, in each case, agrees thoroughly with this difference between them.

The variations might be explained, in part, by the special object of each writer, but are scarcely explicable by this reason alone. They suit well with two successive periods in our Lord's ministry. In St. Matthew, the beatitudes are nine in number, abstract in their form, and stand alone. In St. Luke they are only four, are concrete and personal, being a direct address to the disciples, and are followed by as many woes. After the first year, the opposition of the Jews to our Lord was more overt and persevering, and hence it was natural that warnings should be more prominent, along with invitations and blessings. It is not likely that St. Luke would insert woes that were not then uttered, or that the woes did not answer to the blessings, or that St. Matthew has doubled the number of our Lord's beatitudes,

or that nine woes followed nine blessings. If none of these alternatives be true, the discourses must clearly have been different. The portion in Matt. v. 17—43, beginning with the words, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets" is suitable to an early period, when Jesus had not yet stated clearly the relation in which he stood to Moses and the previous dispensation, and would be less likely to appear in any later repetition. Again, Luke vi. 27—38, compared with Matt. v. 42—48—vii. 1, 2, is not at all like a verbally altered extract of the same discourse, but a selection of two main ideas out of many, which are then amplified, and combined in a different order. The tone, in St. Matthew, is one of calmness and royal majesty; in St. Luke, of deep earnestness, prophetic energy, and pressing entreaty. In one we see a lawgiver delivering public statutes; in the other, an affectionate teacher, who redoubles his exhortations to beloved disciples, and warns them against urgent and threatening evils. This contrast is very clear in Luke vi. 32—34, 37, 38, compared with the passages in the first gospel. Even the caution at the close, Matt. vii. 21, is turned from an abstract lesson into an earnest reproof of actual disobedience, Luke vi. 46. The parable in Luke vi. 39, has every mark of being inserted, because it was actually spoken at the time, though its connexion is rather obscure at first sight. In St. Matthew it is only found much later, and in a context still more plainly historical.

From these remarks it seems to follow that the two discourses were really distinct; that the earlier of them, in St. Matthew, took place in the middle of the first year, at the close of the first general circuit of Galilee; that the other took place late in the spring, or early in the summer, of the second year, after a partial circuit around the sea of Tiberias; that the first of them was followed by the miraculous draught, and the healing of the leper; and the second by the cure of the Centurion's servant, when our Lord returned from the mountain to Capernaum. Hence it will follow that St. Luke, who passes by the first, and

records the second, wrote after St. Matthew, and was acquainted with his gospel, so as purposely to select the later discourse, because the earlier and fuller, of the same general character, had been already given.

II. The seventh chapter of St. Luke contains four events, two of which have been also recorded by St. Matthew, and the two others are found here only. The healing of the Centurion's servant is the first incident, omitted by St. Mark; and St. Luke has restored it in its true place, after the Ordination of the Twelve, and is careful to mark its order, by mentioning the occurrences of the very next day. The purpose of confirming the two other gospels would clearly require the insertion of the chief events, which were peculiar to one of them only. The message of John the Baptist has this character, as in previous chapters, the dispossession at Capernaum, the early retirement the next morning, and the ordination of the Apostles, are common to St. Mark and St. Luke only.

In the first of these portions Luke vii. 1—10, we see the freedom of the writer, in revising and amplifying the brief statement in the first gospel. The words of Jesus, and of the message, are almost exactly the same, but the rest is quite different in phraseology, and the fresh details modify the account of St. Matthew by a very important change. The Centurion, according to St. Luke, did not apply in person, but by elders of the Jews, who reported his good deeds to the Jewish people. "For he loveth our nation, and himself built us the synagogue." He also sent another message, when our Lord was drawing near to his house, and the description which closes the whole narrative is cast in a form entirely new. Yet the message and reply are nearly word for word the very same.

M. Lord,
I am not worthy thou shouldst come
under my roof.

But only speak in a word, and my
servant shall be healed.

L. Lord, trouble not thyself.
For I am not worthy thou shouldst
come under my roof.

But speak in a word, and my servant
shall be healed.

For I myself am a man under authority, having under myself soldiers.

And I say to this, Go, and he goeth, and to another, Come, and he cometh, and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

But when Jesus heard, he marvelled, and said to them that followed,

Verily I say unto you, I have not found such faith, even in Israel.

For I myself am a man set under authority, having under myself soldiers.

And I say to this, Go, and he goeth, and to another, Come, and he cometh, and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

But when Jesus heard, he marvelled at him, and turning, said to the multitude that followed him,

I say unto you, I have not found such faith, even in Israel.

Here it seems plain that the third gospel has retained the very words of the first, with scarcely an alteration. But in the details which precede and follow, the writer has expounded what was obscure in the brief account of St. Matthew, and enlarged it into a fuller narrative.

The resemblance is equally close in the account of John's message, and is the more remarkable from the greater length of the whole passage.

MATTHEW xi. 1—19.

Now when John heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, and said unto him,

Art thou the coming one, or look we for another?

And Jesus answering said unto them, Go and report to John what ye hear and see.

The blind receive sight, and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the

LUKE vii. 19—35.

And when he had called two of his disciples, John went to Jesus, saying,

Art thou the coming one, or look we for another?

When the men were come unto him, they said, John the Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying,

Art thou the coming one, or look we for another?

And in the same hour he healed many of diseases and plagues, and evil spirits, and to many blind he gave sight.

And Jesus answering said unto them, Go and report to John what ye have seen and heard,

That the blind receive sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have

poor have the gospel preached to them, and blessed is he, whosoever is not offended in me.

And when these were departing, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John,

What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? a reed shaken by the wind?

But what went ye out to see? a man clothed in soft garments? behold, they that wear soft garments are in king's houses.

But what went ye out to see? a prophet? yea, I say to you, and much more than a prophet?

For this is he concerning whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee.

Verily I say to you, Among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: yet he that is less in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John; and if ye will receive it, this is Elias, who is to come.

But whereunto shall I liken this generation?

They are like children sitting in the market-places, and calling to their companions, and saying,

We have piped to you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not lamented.

For John came, neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil.

the gospel preached to them, and blessed is he, whosoever is not offended in me.

And when the messengers of John was departed, he began to speak unto the multitudes concerning John.

What have ye gone out into the wilderness to behold? a reed shaken by the wind?

But what have ye gone out to see? a man clothed in soft garments? behold, they that use gorgeous clothing and live in luxury are in the royal houses.

But what have ye gone out to see? a prophet? yea, I say to you, and much more than a prophet.

This is he concerning whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee.

For I say to you, Among them that are born of women, no one is a greater prophet than John the Baptist: yet he that is less in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, not being baptized of him.

Whereunto shall I liken the men of this generation? and to whom are they like?

They are like children sitting in the market-place, and calling one to another, and saying,

We have piped to you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.

For John the Baptist came, neither eating bread, nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold, a man gluttonous and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.

And wisdom is justified by her children.

The Son of man is come, eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.

And wisdom is justified by all her children.

The verbal resemblance in these passages, extending through many verses, and to the minutest terms of expression, is so close, as to prove that one writer has adopted the account of the other. In thirty-five clauses the only difference consists in two verses being changed, two verses and four single words inserted, and one phrase and one word being substituted for another synonymous. The mutual connexion of the two accounts is thus perfectly clear.

The slight changes, however, all indicate that St. Luke's is the later narrative. The introduction in St. Matthew, where the passage is out of order, is abrupt. "Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ." In St. Luke it flows out of the connection with the previous incidents. "And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things. And John calling two of his disciples," &c. St. Matthew, with his usual brevity, puts the message into the mouth of the Baptist himself. St. Luke distinguishes the message and its actual delivery, and reports the very words by which the messengers introduce it. St. Matthew leaves it implied, from the answer of Jesus, that cures were wrought in their presence. St. Luke states the fact distinctly, before the reply is given. "In the same hour he cured many of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and to many that were blind he gave sight." The present tense of Matthew is changed for the past, the proper tense of history. "Tell John the things ye have seen and heard." The phrase "they that wear soft clothing," is elegantly paraphrased: "they that are gorgeously apparelled, and live luxuriously." The word, Amen, so thoroughly Hebrew, is omitted. It occurs only eight times in St. Luke, and more than thirty times in St. Matthew. The remarkable statement, Matt.

xi. 11, is expounded to Gentile readers, who were less familiar with the character of the Baptist, by the addition of a single word, "There is not a greater PROPHET than John the Baptist."

The four next verses, in St. Matthew, allude to the law, the prophets, and a prediction of Malachi respecting Elijah. In their stead St. Luke introduces a parenthesis of his own, to explain the reproof of Jesus which follows them. Since he had before mentioned the general acceptance of John's ministry, his statement ch. iii. 15, and the rebuke of our Lord, might have seemed inconsistent, without such an explanation. Again, the account of the Baptist, that he came "neither eating nor drinking," is partly explained in St. Matthew by ch. iii. 4., "his meat was locusts and wild honey." St. Luke, who has not alluded to this circumstance, gives here a brief exposition of our Lord's meaning: "For John the Baptist came neither eating bread, nor drinking wine." It seems thus clear, from the whole passage, that St. Luke has revised and slightly altered the earlier narrative of St. Matthew.

The two other portions of the same chapter, the raising of the Widow's Son, and the anointing in the house of the Pharisee, are equally conclusive for the originality of the third gospel. They shew that the writer, while proved otherwise to be acquainted with the two earlier gospels, was not dependent on them, but had direct and separate sources of information. The former has all the marks of regular and orderly history, in its first opening. "It came to pass, the day after, that he journeyed to a city called Nain." And the notice is the more striking, as the name of the place, though little visited, has survived to the present day. The account has the vivid features, which imply the report of an eye-witness; while the clause in the answer to John's disciples, "the dead are raised," receives from it a direct explanation. For here the raising of the Ruler's Daughter, placed earlier than that message by St. Matthew, though really later, has been restored, as in St. Mark, to its true historical position.

The anointing has some features of resemblance to the one at Bethany, recorded in the three other gospels, and hence some have sought to identify them, so that the accuracy of all the accounts might be disproved. But in reality, the diversity is more striking than the partial resemblance. In time, in place, in the character of the woman, the person of the complainant, the answer of our Lord, the parting promise to the woman, and even in the extent of the anointing, there is an entire contrast.

No single gospel has recorded both of these events, and their general similarity will account for the omission. The more important of them would be likely to be first put on record, and a later gospel would then, for variety, be just as likely to insert the other only. Now the anointing at Bethany, though later in time, was far more prominent in our Lord's history. It occurred in the week before his Passion, was an occasion for the treachery of Judas, and was joined with a direct promise to Mary of lasting honour. The promise would naturally secure a place for the event in the earliest gospel. After St. Matthew and St. Mark had both recorded it, St. Luke might well prefer to mention the earlier anointing, itself also full of deep interest; and St. John, last of all, supplies further details of the more important event, to complete the account in the earlier gospels.

III. The events of the Circuit, with the Teaching in Parables, are the next portion to be compared. After the ordination of the Twelve, St. Mark recounts the gathering of multitudes again, the message of our Lord's relatives, the Discourse on blasphemy, though in an abridged form, the visit of our Lord's mother and brethren, and the teaching in Parables, in all which events the order is the same as in St. Matthew. Of the seven Parables, however, in the first gospel, only two are given, and two other new ones are added. The agreement in the general succession is complete.

The interval, however, must have been considerable, between the second-first Sabbath, when the corn was ripening, and the seed-time, which we may reasonably presume to have come,

when the parable of the sower was given. St. Luke, accordingly, after the Ordination of the Twelve, and the sermon of that day, supplies other events; the healing of the Centurion's servant, the visit to him, the message of John the Baptist, the anointing in some city, and last of all, another circuit of Galilee, through every city and village. This last explains the interval of time, which is not filled up in the earlier gospels; while the mention, by name, of the women who attended our Lord, is a fresh proof of the writer's original and independent information.

The discourse on blasphemy would follow next, since both St. Matthew and St. Mark place it earlier in the same day with the parable of the sower. But St. Luke has a similar event to record considerably later, and therefore passes it in silence. The omission leads to another slight change, as the visit of our Lord's mother and brethren is placed, as in a parenthesis, after the teaching in parables, though it occurred a little earlier on the same day. The words of the gospel, however, have just the form we might expect in an exact writer, when the precise order of time was not meant to be specified. "Now there came to him his mother and his brethren."

The account of the parables, in the third gospel, accords with the principle, that one main purpose was the confirmation of both the earlier narratives. The first and most prominent of those in St. Matthew is given, and one of the two which is peculiar to St. Mark, but no others. In phraseology, St. Mark follows St. Matthew closely, but St. Luke varies from both in almost every clause, and the parable, common to him with St. Mark only, is expressed with a classic elegance of style.

In the parable of the Sower, St. Mark adheres, word for word, to St. Matthew, with only two or three slight variations. The singular and plural, in the Greek, are interchanged, and the order, in verse 8, is reversed, so as to exhibit a climax:—"some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred." This clearly increases the emphasis of the passage. St. Luke, who here

studies brevity, gives only the highest number—"and bare fruit an hundred-fold."

IV. The Voyage and the Return, with the raising of the Ruler's Daughter, are found in all the three gospels, but with important differences between St. Matthew and the two others. The whole account, Matt. viii. 18—ix. 1, 18—26. Mark iv. 35—v. 43. Luke viii. 22—56, will throw much light on the mutual relation of the three narratives.

It has been already shewn, by weighty reasons, that St. Mark has here restored the true order, from which St. Matthew had deviated, by inserting the Cure of the Paralytic, and his own call, between the return from Gadara and the healing of Jairus' daughter. Accordingly, though St. Luke does not fix the voyage to the same evening when the parable of the sower was given, he is equally clear with St. Mark in stating the direct sequence of the voyage, the return to the western side of the lake, and the miraculous resurrection. The passages in the two gospels are these :—

Mark v. 21, 22. "And when Jesus was passed over by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him, and he was nigh unto the sea. And behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name."

Luke viii. 40. "And it came to pass that, when Jesus was returned, the people welcomed him, for they were all watching for him. And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue."

The copious details, in both narratives, and the precision of these statements, are a strong proof that the Evangelists have restored the events to their true order, and thus rectified the transposition in St. Matthew's gospel. The close resemblance of St. Mark and St. Luke, throughout, is a clear sign that one was acquainted with the work of the other, while a minute comparison will prove that St. Luke's is the later and revised narrative.

1. In the account of the storm, Luke viii. 22—25, the en-

trance into the ship is given in the words of St. Matthew, the order to cross over in those of St. Mark, but with a slight change, indicative of a later composition. St. Matthew, who was present, and St. Mark the interpreter of St. Peter, mention definitely "the boat," but St. Luke, as a mere historian, and not an eye-witness, drops the article. St. Matthew says that the disciples followed Jesus; St. Mark, that they took him into the ship, as he was. Probably St. Peter and the sons of Zebedee would be already in the vessel, and St. Matthew and the rest would follow. St. Luke, avoiding this minute contrast, says simply that "he entered the ship, and his disciples," and makes the addition, to remove a provincial idiom, that would be obscure to readers out of Palestine—"Let us cross over to the other side OF THE LAKE." He mentions the sleep of Jesus in the order of its occurrence, while the others notice it only at the moment of the disciples' alarm. His description is combined from theirs—the squall of wind (λαιλαψ ανεμου) from St. Mark, its effect on the water from St. Matthew, the participle, "coming to him" (προσελθοντες) from St. Matthew, the verb, διηγειραν, intermediate between ηγειραν and διεγειρουσι in the others. The graphic account of their situation, "the ship was covered with waves," "the waves kept beating into the ship, so that it was now full," are replaced by the simpler statement, "they were filled, and were in danger." The place of the rebuke is the same as in St. Mark, after the storm is laid. The words, "he arose and rebuked the wind," are common to all, but St. Luke substitutes for the mention of *the sea*, a name which he never gives to the lake of Tiberias, a classical paraphrase, "the raging of the water (κλυδωνι του υδατος.) The wonder, in St. Matthew (εθαυμασαν), and the fear, expressed by St. Mark in a Hebrew idiom (φοβηθησαν φοβον μεγαν) are both combined in the classical phrase (φοβηθεντες δε εθαυμασαν.) The first part of the exclamation is exactly the same as in St. Mark, who varies slightly from the first gospel. There is no part of St. Luke's description, which is not found in one of the others, and words are borrowed from each, with

very slight variation. But the minuter details of St. Mark are omitted, one incident is restored to its actual order, a more classic title is given to the lake of Tiberias, a Hebraism is dropped at the close, and the fear and wonder, separately reported by the others, are here combined together. All these are signs that St. Luke was acquainted with the two other gospels, and used them freely, though without a servile dependence on them, in the composition of his later and more finished narrative.

2. The account of the dispossession is given with much fuller details by St. Mark and St. Luke, than by St. Matthew. There is also another remarkable difference. For St. Matthew reports the cure of two demoniacs, while the other Evangelists are agreed in speaking of one only. Several explanations have been proposed of this difficulty. It is certainly highly improbable that two demoniacs should thus by concert, address the same words jointly to our Lord, or that if two were present at the same time, the other gospels should both speak of one, and in a manner quite distinctive. "He that was possessed besought Jesus, that he might be with him," &c. On the other hand, the explanation of Da Costa, in his recent and interesting work, seems equally harsh and violent, that the demoniac, and some one who was seen attacked by him, were viewed together by the Evangelist, and thus led him to speak of a double cure. A usual idiom and license will permit the use of the plural for the singular, in many cases, but not that two should be specified, when there was really but one. Instances, however, will appear, in which St. Matthew groups events, not occurring strictly at the same moment, but of a common character, and thus compresses his narrative, retaining only the main features of the occurrence. We have only to suppose another dispossession, which might occur during the interval before the return of the Gadarenes from the city, without the same peculiar features as the first, and it will be quite agreeable to the style of this Evangelist, to unite both events in one, and to ascribe jointly to the two demo-

nias the incidents which, in strictness of speech, belonged to one of them alone. It would then be in harmony with the purpose of the later gospels, to single out the more important and characteristic event, and give it with full detail, and to omit entirely all reference to the other. In the two thieves we have a very similar instance. Had only one thief been crucified with our Lord, the phrase would be most unnatural; but it is easy to understand how a fact might be ascribed to the two conjointly, which really belonged to one of them alone.

3. The comparison of the two accounts in St. Mark and St. Luke, will serve to prove their connexion, and ascertain their real order.

MARK v. 1—21.

And they came to the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.

And when he was come out from the ship, straightway there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling in the tombs.

And no man could bind him, no, not with chains, because he had often been bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces, and no man was able to tame him: and continually, night and day, in the tombs and the mountains, he kept crying, and cutting himself with stones.

But having seen Jesus from afar, he ran and worshipped him, and cried with a loud voice, and said,

What have I to do with thee, Jesus, the Son of God most high? I adjure thee by God, torment me not.

For he said to him, Come out, thou unclean spirit, from the man.

And he asked him, What is thy name? And he saith to him, Legion is my name, because we are many.

LUKE viii. 26—40.

And they sailed over into the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee.

And when he was come out to the land, there met him a certain man from the city, who had devils for a long time, and put on no garment, and abode in no house, but in the tombs.

[For many times it had seized on him, and he was bound, guarded with chains and fetters, and breaking the bands, he was driven by the devil into desert places.]

But having seen Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said,

What have I to do with thee, Jesus, the Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not.

For he charged the unclean spirit to come out from the man.

And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.

And they besought him much, that he would not send them away out of the country.

Now there was there near the mountain a great herd of swine feeding, and all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them; and Jesus straightway suffered them.

And the unclean spirits, having gone out, entered into the swine: and the herd rushed down the cliff into the sea, (now they were about two thousand,) and were choked in the sea.

But they that kept them fled, and reported it in the city and in the fields: and they went out to see what was done.

And they come to Jesus, and behold the man that was possessed, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind, even him that had the legion; and they were afraid.

And they that had seen, reported to them how it befel the possessed, and concerning the swine.

And they began to entreat him to depart out of their coasts.

And when he was entered into the ship, he that had been possessed entreated him, that he might be with him.

And he suffered him not, but saith to him, Go away to thy home, to thy friends, and report to them what things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath pitied thee.

And he departed, and began to proclaim in Decapolis what things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.

And they besought him, that he would not command them to depart into the deep.

Now there was there a herd of many swine, feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them; and he suffered them.

And the devils having gone out of the man, entered into the swine; and the herd rushed down the cliff into the lake, and were choked.

But they that kept them (having seen what happened) fled, and reported it in the city and in the fields: and they went out to see what was done.

And they came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the devils had gone forth, sitting, clothed, and in his right mind, close by the feet of Jesus: and they were afraid.

They also that had seen, related to them how the man possessed had been healed.

And all the multitude of the country of the Gadarenes besought him to depart from them: for they were seized with great fear.

And he entered into the ship and returned. Now the man, out of whom the devils were gone, begged of him, that he might be with him.

But Jesus sent him away, saying, Return to thy home, and relate what things God hath done for thee.

And he departed, proclaiming through all the city what things Jesus had done for him.

Here, with one slight exception, the order of every clause is the same from first to last. The verbal correspondence is always considerable, and in sixty or seventy words, is exact. Yet the variations are not such as to be explained by translation from a common original. They indicate rather a free revision, with a view to some special purpose of the later narrative.

The first change is in the geographical phraseology. Instead of "the other side of the sea, the country of the Gadarenes," we have an expression freed from the provincial idiom—"the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee." It is clear that the phrase in St. Mark is natural for a Galilean writer, but the one in St. Luke is better suited for readers, remote from Palestine.

The next change is the omission of the adverb, *ευθως*, which is so frequent in St. Mark, as to be idiomatic. The mention of the tombs, to a stranger, would be very abrupt. Hence St. Luke first describes the man by his original home, "a man from the city," then by his distressing state, "he had devils a long time," and then by consequence of this possession, his naked condition, and mournful dwelling in the tombs.

The other variations tend to the same object, and adapt the narrative for readers, less familiar with the idiom of Palestine. Instead of "he worshipped him" we have the equivalent, "he fell down before him." Instead of the adjuration, we have the simpler address, "I beseech thee." The charge to the unclean spirits is given in the indirect form, which is more usual in general history. The unhappy state of the man is brought into causal connexion with the words of our Lord by a slight transposition, so as to shew the urgency of the case, and the compassion of Jesus. The number of the devils is stated by the writer, instead of being given as part of their reply. The request, not to "send them out of the country," receives a striking exposition of its true meaning, "that he would not command them to depart into the abyss." The mountain is named, in its historical connexion, as the feeding place of the

swine, which removes the seeming abruptness in the second gospel. The exact number of the herd is omitted, as a needless detail; the phrase, "having gone out," is rendered plainer; *sea* is changed to *lake*, or omitted; and all besides is verbally the same. The double description, "the man possessed, and that had the legion" is replaced by one of a simpler kind, "the man from whom the devils had gone out," and a minute grace is given to the narrative, by the remark that he was sitting "close by the feet of Jesus." All these changes imply a revision of St. Mark's narrative, by which it is rendered more suitable for general readers out of Palestine; but will not agree with the hypothesis of two translations from the same original, and still less with their derivation, quite independently of each other, from oral tradition alone.

In the narrative of the Ruler's Daughter, it is clear that St. Mark and St. Luke wrote after St. Matthew, whose brief account undergoes an important modification. But the minute differences also prove, as Dr. Townson has remarked, that St. Luke followed after St. Mark, and revised his narrative.

The name of the Ruler is not given in St. Matthew, and he is called *αρχων*, a general term. St. Mark not only gives his name, Jairus, but a more definite title (*αρχισυναγωγος*.) St. Luke retains the name, and renders the title still more distinct, *αρχων της συναγωγης*. Also in St. Mark the Jewish office of the ruler is in the foreground, while in St. Luke it seems a mere accessory, and is thrown into the shade. In the passage that follows, St. Luke has varied the arrangement, and thus added to the clearness of the narrative.

K. And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter and James, and John the brother of James: and he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue.

L. And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter and James and John, and the father and mother of the maiden.

The words of St. Mark might be thought to signify that our Lord stopped the multitude on the way to the house, a circum-

stance not easy to explain without a miracle. St. Luke, by a simple change of order, removes the difficulty, and shews that all, except the three Apostles, were restrained from entering the house, and from that alone.

The request of Jairus, in St. Mark, has the direct, in St. Luke the indirect form. The age of the damsel, in St. Mark, appears incidentally, upon her recovery. It is stated by St. Luke, as in regular history, when she is first mentioned, in the application for her cure. A further and touching circumstance is added, that she was an only child. The description of the woman, rather inartificial in St. Mark, is given by St. Luke in a more terse and elegant form of expression. The changes in verse 49 indicate a delicate revision, to secure greater elegance and perspicuity. The plural is replaced by the singular, since the message was probably brought, and clearly delivered, by one person. *Απο* is altered to *παρα*, since the former, in strictness, would imply that the message came *from* the ruler, instead of coming *to* him, and *from* his house, while he was absent. The aorist *απεθανε* is replaced by the perfect, *τεθυηκε*, which more forcibly implies her death, as complete and irreversible. The promise, only implied in St. Mark, is distinctly expressed by St. Luke in our Lord's answer:—"she shall be saved." The scornful laugh of the minstrels has its reason assigned—"knowing that she was dead." The cause of her revival is more clearly stated—"her spirit came again;" while the charge to give her food is brought into connexion with her recovery. The prohibition to divulge the miracle is thus made to close the account, and forms the moral application of the whole. The Hebraism of St. Mark, in describing the parents' astonishment, is also removed. All these changes, though separately slight, imply a later and revised composition.

V. The following chapter of St. Luke ix. 1—50, gives many proofs of its later origin, which deserve separate notice.

1. The next event in St. Matthew and St. Mark, is the visit to Nazareth. Of this no trace is left in the third gospel. And

a simple explanation can be given of this omission. St. Luke already supplied an account of an earlier visit, which preceded the call of the disciples, and the public teaching at Capernaum ; and the same motive, which is elsewhere apparent, of avoiding the repetition of similar events, will thus explain the present omission. As for the visits themselves, which some have confounded together, the contrast between them is very manifest in many particulars.

2. The Commission of the Twelve, which is given at length in St. Matthew, is related by St. Mark more briefly, but restored to its historical place, after the visit to Nazareth, and before the death of the Baptist. The account in St. Luke is very similar to that in St. Mark, but some clauses resemble rather the words of the first gospel. The whole appears like a brief summary derived from the two others, as will be seen by comparing them in the original.

M. Καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος τοὺς δώδεκα μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ,
ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν πνευμάτων ἀκαθάρτων,
καὶ θεραπεύειν πᾶσαν νόσον.

Τούτους ἀπέστειλεν. . κηρύσσετε, λέγοντες,
ὅτι ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν·
ἀσθενοῦντας θεραπεύετε.

K. Καὶ παρήγγειλεν αὐτοῖς ἵνα
μηδὲν αἴρωσιν εἰς ὁδόν,
εἰ μὴ ράβδον μόνον, μὴ πῆραν, μὴ ἄρτον,

μὴ εἰς τὴν ζώνην χαλκὸν,
καὶ μὴ ἐνδύσῃτε δύο χιτῶνας.

Καὶ ὅπου ἂν εἰσέλθῃτε εἰς οἰκίαν
ἐκεῖ μένετε, ὥς ἂν ἐξέλθῃτε ἐκεῖθεν.

Καὶ ὅσοι ἂν μὴ δέξωνται ὑμᾶς

M. ἐξερχομένοι τῆς οἰκίας ἢ τῆς πόλεως ἐκείνης

ἐκτινάξατε τὸν κονιορτὸν τῶν ποδῶν ὑμῶν.

L. Συγκαλεσάμενος δὲ τοὺς δώδεκα μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ,
ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς δύναμιν καὶ ἐξ. ἐπὶ πάντα τὰ δαιμόνια,
καὶ νόσους θεραπεύειν.

Καὶ ἀπέστειλεν αὐτοὺς κηρύσσειν

τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ,
καὶ ἰᾶσθαι τοὺς ἀσθενοῦντας.

Καὶ εἶπε πρὸς αὐτοὺς· μηδὲν αἵρετε εἰς τὴν ὁδόν,

μήτε ράβδους, μήτε πῆραν, μήτε ἄρτον,

μήτε ἀργύριον,
μήτε ἀνὰ δύο χιτῶνας ἔχειν·

Καὶ εἰς ἣν ἂν οἰκίαν εἰσέλθῃτε,

ἐκεῖ μένετε, καὶ ἐκεῖθεν ἐξέρχεσθε.

Καὶ ὅσοι ἂν μὴ δέξωνται ὑμᾶς, ἐξερχομένοι ἀπὸ τῆς πόλεως ἐκείνης,

καὶ τὸν κονιορτὸν ἀπὸ τῶν ποδῶν ὑμῶν ἀποτινάξατε.

*K. Καὶ ἐξελθόντες,
ἐκήρυσσον ἵνα μετανοήσωσι
καὶ δαιμόνια πολλὰ ἐξέβαλλον
καὶ ἡλειφον ἐλαίῳ πολλοὺς ἄρρωσ-
τους, καὶ ἐθεράπευον.*

*Ἐξερχόμενοι δὲ διήρχοντο κατὰ τὰς
κώμας,
εὐαγγελιζόμενοι
καὶ θεραπεύοντες πανταχοῦ.*

This comparison agrees well with the supposition, that St. Luke has freely combined the accounts of this charge in the two other gospels, retaining the brevity and general outline of St. Mark, but adopting some of the phrases of St. Matthew's fuller narrative.

3. The account of Herod's alarm is the next section of the history. Here it is plain that St. Mark has adhered closely to St. Matthew's outline, and has supplied fuller details. St. Luke states simply the perplexity of Herod, and does not digress, like the other Evangelists, to report the circumstances of the Baptist's death, but alludes to it as a fact already known. There is also an observable difference in the statement of Herod's feelings.

*K. And king Herod heard of him,
for his name was spread abroad, and he
said that John the Baptist was risen
from the dead; and therefore mighty
works are wrought by him. Others
said, that it is Elias: and others said,
It is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.*

But when Herod heard it, he said,
It is John whom I beheaded, he is
risen from the dead.

*L. Now Herod the tetrarch heard of
all that was done by him, and was
perplexed, because it was said by some
that John the Baptist was risen from
the dead; and of some, that Elias had
appeared; and of others, that one of the
old prophets was risen again.*

And Herod said, John have I be-
headed; but who is this, of whom I
hear such things? and he desired to
see him.

Here St. Mark represents it as the deliberate opinion of Herod, that Jesus was the Baptist risen from the dead. In St. Luke this opinion is said to be current among the people; but Herod is described as merely perplexed what judgment to form respecting the real character of Jesus. In the first surprise of these wonderful reports, a guilty conscience might lead him to suppose that St. John was indeed risen again; and when his habitual

scepticism revived, he still might not be able to avoid a feeling of doubt and perplexity, which made him desirous to see Jesus. One account will thus have a dramatic, and the other, an historical truth. St. Mark will refer to the first moment of wonder and alarm; St. Luke to the tetrarch's habitual feeling, which is more suited for the record of a regular history. The closing sentence, Luke ix. 9, evidently has a prospective reference to the latter incident, xxii. 6—10, and shews how far this gospel is removed from the character of a piece-meal composition. The phrase, "one of the old prophets is risen again," is a brief comment on the opinion of the people, which makes it more perspicuous to Gentile readers.

4. The miracle of the Five Thousand has been quoted before, to prove the intimate connexion between the two first gospels. The account in St. Luke is also very similar, but the changes, though slight, agree well with the idea of its later composition. St. Mark had observed, only at the close, that the disciples were sent over before unto Bethsaida. Here we read, at the opening, that Jesus "went aside into a desert place of a city called Bethsaida." This implies a circle of readers, to whom Bethsaida of Galilee was unknown. St. Matthew has mentioned that Jesus healed the sick among the people, and St. Mark, that he taught them many things; but St. Luke has combined both particulars, in a more classical style. "And receiving them, he spake to them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing." The time of day is expressed by a more elegant Greek idiom, and the number of those who were fed is given earlier, when the inquiry about provision was first made.

5. This miracle is followed by many events, occupying sixty-six verses in St. Matthew, and seventy-five in St. Mark, of which no trace is found in the third gospel. For this omission, the principles already laid down will give a sufficient reason. The object of confirming the testimony of the two former witnesses has now been amply fulfilled, especially as the accounts of Passion Week are naturally the same, in substance, in all the gospels.

The other purpose, of supplying fresh information, becomes therefore more prominent in the rest of the gospel, and to combine this with brevity, it is natural to omit some of those portions, in which the consent of the two earlier writers renders a third witness less important. Such is eminently the character of the passages, Matt. xiv. 22—xvi. 12. Mark vi. 45—vii. 26. And besides, the similarity of the second miracle, in the feeding of the four thousand, and the special reference to Jewish customs in the discourse on tradition, would be further reasons for passing them over in this gospel for Greek converts. But the confession of Peter, the discourse on self-denial, and the transfiguration, were cardinal elements in the gospel history. If St. Luke wrote after the others, and as a supplement to their accounts, the omission of one portion, and the retention of the other, is equally explained.

6. The confession of Peter, with the discourse on self-denial, is given in all the three gospels, but with considerable variations. The language of St. Luke, however, is mainly identical with that of St. Mark, though one portion is omitted, and the alterations in the third gospel prove its later composition.

K. And by the way he questioned his disciples, saying to them, Whom do men say that I am?

And they answered, John the Baptist; and others, Elias; but others, one of the prophets,

And he said to them, But whom say ye that I am?

And Peter answering, saith to him, Thou art the Christ.

And he charged them, that they tell no one concerning him: and he began to teach them,

The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

And when he had called the people to him, with his disciples, he said to them,

L. And he questioned them, saying, Whom do the multitude (*οχλοι*) say that I am?

And they answering, said, John the Baptist; but others, Elias; but others, that one of the old prophets is risen.

And he said to them, But whom say ye that I am?

And Peter answering, said, The Christ of God.

And he charged them, and commanded to tell it no man, saying,

The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and in the third day be raised up.

And he said unto all,

Whoever desires to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.

For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel, shall save it.

For what will it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

For whoever shall be ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man also will be ashamed of him, when he shall come in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.

And he said to them, Verily I say to you,

There are some of those standing here, who shall not taste death, until they have seen the kingdom of God come in power.

If any one desires to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.

For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, he shall save it.

For what is a man profited, having gained the whole world, and having destroyed himself, it being lost?

For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, of him will the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory and the Father's, and of the holy angels.

But I tell you of a truth,

There are some of those standing here, who shall not taste death, until they have seen the kingdom of God.

St. Matthew, in this part of his gospel, has recorded fully the honourable promise made to Peter; while St. Mark, as writing under Peter's own direction, has passed it by, and mentions only the severe rebuke he presently received. St. Luke gives the confession briefly, as in St. Mark, and omits both the rebuke and the promise. The Hebraism "after three days," is replaced by the more exact definition of time, "on the third day." The popular notion, that Jesus was one of the prophets, is again explained more clearly, "that one of the ancient prophets is risen again." The allusion to that particular generation of the Jews, as sinful and adulterous, is omitted, and the Hebrew term, Amen, is replaced by the answering Greek expression. With these exceptions, which indicate an explanatory revision, the agreement is almost entire, from first to last. A clearer proof could scarcely be given, that one writer knew and adopted the

account of the other, and that St. Mark was the earlier of the two writers.

7. The account of the Transfiguration is very nearly the same in St. Mark and St. Matthew. The variations in St. Luke are considerable, and the conversation about Elias is omitted altogether. The interval, instead of six, is said to be "as it were eight days." The Apostles are named in a different order, "Peter, and John, and James," implying a later date, when the younger Apostle was better known. The expression "transfigured," which the heathen applied so often to their fabulous gods, is replaced by a paraphrase, "the fashion of his countenance was different." Moses and Elias are introduced, as names less familiarly known than in the other gospels. "There talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias." The subject of their conversation is reported, the approaching death of Jesus at Jerusalem. The sleepiness of the disciples is noticed, and their success in resisting it, which adds a fresh moral beauty to the description. The succession of incidents is also given with touches of minute accuracy, more than in the other gospels. These characters seem to imply, not a simple revision of their accounts, but a further and original report, which must probably have been obtained from another of the three Apostles. It may be viewed as almost certain, that Matthew and Mark derived theirs from St. Peter, and this may account for the want of fuller expansion in the second, compared with the first gospel. When St. Luke wrote, James had certainly been dead many years, and hence the only other informant would be St. John. The character of St. Luke's narrative appears to agree well with the supposition, that it was drawn from this new source.

8. The account of the dispossession, in St. Luke, differs from those in St. Matthew and St. Mark, either by the omission of the sequel, or by greater conciseness. But the portion that follows, exhibits the close relation between the second and third gospels.

K. But they understood not (ἡγνόουν) that saying, and they feared to question him.

And he came to Capernaum, and in the house he asked them,

What reasoned ye among yourselves by the way?

But they were silent, for by the way they had reasoned among themselves, who was greatest.

And he took a child, and sat him in the midst of them; and taking him in his arms, he said to them.

Whoever shall receive one such children in my name receiveth me, and whoever receiveth me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

And John answered him, saying,

Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us, and we forbad him, because he followeth us not.

But Jesus said, Forbid him not.

For he that is not against us, is for us.

L. But they understood not that saying, and it was hid from them that they perceived it not, and they feared to question him of that saying.

Then there entered a reasoning among them, who was greatest.

And Jesus, when he knew the reasoning of their hearts, took a child, and set him by him, and said to them,

Whoever shall receive this child in my name, receiveth me: and whoever receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.

And John answering said,

Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbad him, because he followeth us not.

And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not.

For he that is not against us, is for us.

Here, except that one clause is omitted, and another transposed and slightly varied, and the preface thrown into a new form, the correspondence is verbally complete. This is the more observable, because from this point St. Luke's narrative begins to proceed entirely alone, and the conversation with St. John does not appear at all in St. Matthew's gospel. If St. Mark had followed St. Luke, and borrowed the passage from him, there seems no reason why he should abstain entirely from introducing any part of the seven following chapters. It appears, then, that St. Luke has here adopted the incident from St. Mark, with no change, but a slight compression. He has thus given a parting confirmation to the testimony of the second gospel, in one of the four portions which are peculiar to it, before he enters on the other main purpose of his narrative, of imparting to the

Church a variety of information, which neither of his predecessors had supplied. There is thus a powerful and convincing sign that he wrote after the two other Evangelists, with the double design of ratifying more fully their statements, and of enlarging the circle of the gospel narrative, by further miracles and discourses, which occurred towards the close of our Saviour's ministry.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE RELATIVE ORDER OF ST. LUKE'S GOSPEL. THE LAST CIRCUIT AND JOURNEY.

AFTER the dispute at Capernaum, (Luke ix. 50.) the gospel of St. Luke, through many chapters, appears to diverge entirely from the two others, and proceeds alone. The events of this portion, if regular, must belong to our Lord's last journey; and even if partly irregular, they are placed between the dispute, Matt. xviii., and the blessing of the little children, Matt. xix. 10, where there is some interval of time implied in St. Matthew's and St. Mark's narratives. Many of the discourses, however, or separate sayings of our Lord, are nearly the same as occur elsewhere in the first gospel. And thus a double inquiry will arise, whether the events themselves are different; and if different, how this frequent correspondence between the two writers is to be explained.

I. First we have to inquire whether or not the discourses in that part, which resemble those in St. Matthew, are really the same. In this case, one or both of the gospels must be highly irregular. If the discourses, however, be different, each gospel may still be regular, and the comparison of similar discourses will throw further light on the order in which the two gospels were composed.

The nature and extent of the transposition, assuming the discourses to be the same, will be perceived at once from the follow-

ing summary, where the order in St. Luke is the basis of comparison.

The Caution to three Disciples,
Matt. viii. 18—22.

The Harvest and Labourers, ix. 37,
38; x. 7—16.

Woe on Galilean cities &c. xi. 21—
24, 25—27.

The Disciples' Privilege, xiii. 16, 17.

The Lord's Prayer, vi. 9—13; vii.
7—11.

Discourse on Blasphemy, xii. 24—30.

Unclean Spirit's return, xii. 43—45.

Sign of Jonas, xii. 38—42.

The Light of the Body, v. 15; vi.
22, 23.

Woes on the Pharisees, xxiii. 25, 26,
23, 6, 7, 27, 4, 29, 31, 35, 36, 13.

Warning against hypocrisy, x. 26—
33; xii. 32, 19, 20.

Carefulness, vi. 25—33, 20, 21.

Watchfulness, xxiv. 43—50.

Strife caused by the Gospel, x. 34—
36.

Signs of the Times, xvi. 2, 3.

Reconciliation, v. 25, 26.

Mustard Seed and Leaven, xiii. 31
—33.

The Strait Gate, vii. 13, 14, 22,
23; viii. 11, 12; xix. 30.

Doom of Jerusalem, xxiii. 37—39.

Self-abasement, xxiii. 12.

Self-denial, x. 37, 38.

Salt without savour, v. 13.

Two Masters, &c. vi. 24; xi. 12, 13.

Endurance of the Law, v. 18, 32.

Offences, xviii. 7, 6.

Days of Noah, xxiv. 37—41.

Self-exaltation, xxiii. 12.

It is clear from this list that one or both of the gospels must be thoroughly irregular, if those discourses which resemble each other are the same. This alone, after the evidence already adduced, is a strong presumption for their real diversity. But we have also many instances in the same gospel, of sayings repeated by our Lord at different times, almost in the very same words, as Matt. xii. 39—xvi. 4. Mark ix. 34—xii. 24. Luke viii. 16—xi. 33.

A further presumption may be drawn from the nature of our Lord's ministry. It lasted three years, and was carried on in hundreds of places throughout Palestine, before assemblies of hearers who were changing from day to day. Hence it is morally certain that many of his discourses would be often repeated, though in each instance there might be partial variations, to suit the varying circumstances of each audience. If the whole of our Lord's sayings had been recorded, it would certainly have

been a hundred times longer than what is now left us in the four gospels. Hence the mere resemblance of two passages, without further evidence, can be no proof that the discourse is actually the same. Yet it must be probable that any discourse or saying would be varied in the repetition, and abstract reasons alone will hardly teach us the usual extent of such variation.

In the present case, St. Luke, who professes to write an account in order, has included the whole within a period of our Saviour's ministry, which is entirely omitted in the two other gospels. Now it is morally certain that, in the last six months before his death, our Lord would repeat many things, which he had spoken earlier in his ministry. The only reasonable doubt will be, whether St. Luke, if he knew the other gospel, would have included in his own selection so much that was already recorded by St. Matthew at an earlier date. There is, however, a most weighty reason why this course should have been preferred. While the character of the third gospel, as an addition to the evangelical history, rendered it desirable to insert many fresh facts and discourses, the object of confirming the greater part of the record by two witnesses would be best secured, by selecting many which were the same, in substance, with others recorded by St. Matthew. There would thus be a substantial confirmation of the message by two writers; while fuller light would be derived from the mention of two distinct events, where the same truths are presented, according to the varying circumstances of the hearers, in new combinations.

Again, some of the passages which most nearly resemble each other, have notes of time, in each gospel, which forbid us to confound them together, and a relation to their context, in each instance, which forbids their dislocation. The prayer for labourers is exactly the same as the mission of the Twelve Apostles in St. Matthew, and of the Seventy Disciples in St. Luke. The words "Blessed are your eyes," &c. in St. Matthew, are closely linked with the Parable of the Sower, and in St. Luke with the return of the Seventy, events more than a year apart, and are so appro-

priate in both cases, as to vindicate the truth of their position in each gospel. The woes on the Pharisees appear in St. Matthew on the last day of our Lord's public ministry ; but in St. Luke, during a private dinner in a Pharisee's house, somewhere in the dominions of Herod. A passage of some length, resembling part of the Sermon on the Mount, follows the same day. Again, chap. xiii, in Herod's dominions, ends with the same warning to Jerusalem, which in St. Matthew is the appropriate and emphatic close of our Lord's public ministry. In all these cases the words are nearly the same, and still the occasions on which they were uttered are clearly different. It is a natural inference that the same remark still applies, even where the evidence is less decisive, since the order of St. Luke's gospel, in all the instances alike, requires the separation. Let us examine a few of these parallel passages, which have been usually confounded together.

II. THE CAUTION TO DISCIPLES, Matt. viii. 18—22. Luke ix. 57—62.

The verbal resemblance between these passages is very great, and still there are many marks that the occasions were quite different. The voyage to Gadara is given by St. Luke, with a plain reference to the account in St. Matthew. If the events were the same, and took place at that time, there is no reason why St. Luke should not have retained the true order, which he found in St. Matthew. Again, one event took place when Jesus was preparing to cross the lake of Gennesaret, and retire from the crowds ; the other, when he had lately passed a Samaritan village, and was preparing for the most public part of his whole ministry. Two disciples are addressed in one case, three in the other. Two of them, in St. Luke, have the charge to go and preach the gospel : no such charge is mentioned by St. Matthew. And this agrees with the context, since one event was earlier than the first Mission of the Twelve, while the other is placed just before the Mission of the Seventy. The self-denial, in one case, was in the stormy voyage to the desert side of the lake ; in the other, it lay clearly in the summons to take part in a

public ministry, of much odium and some real danger. One party, in St. Matthew, was a scribe, but no such peculiar character is given to the first applicant in St. Luke's gospel.

III. THE LORD'S PRAYER, Matt. vi. 9—13 ; Luke xi. 1—4.

It has been usual, with recent critics, to maintain that this prayer was only once given ; and the greater number, as Schleiermacher, Sieffert, Olshausen, and Neander, and more recently Da Costa, imagine that St. Luke alone has given it in its true place. It is certainly there placed in a very natural and appropriate connexion ; while the short parable that follows unites it closely with the general command and promise in verses 9—13 of the same chapter. But then the connexion in St. Matthew is not less appropriate. Three practical subjects are there treated in succession, alms, prayer, and fasting. Under the first and last a warning is given against hypocrisy ; under the second, a further caution against vain repetitions, to avoid which this brief pattern is set before them. It is followed, not as in St. Luke, by a direct encouragement to prayer, but by a statement to justify the peculiar form of the petition for forgiveness. One connexion is just as suited to the public instructions of a Lawgiver, as the other to the private admonitions of a most loving Saviour and Friend. That this prayer should be repeated once more, after an interval of more than two years, cannot surely have the shadow of difficulty with any reasonable mind. Besides, the occasion of the request in St. Luke makes it highly probable that the disciples both desired and expected a much longer formulary. Our Saviour, by repeating simply the brief prayer he had already given, as well as by the parable and the promise, recalls their thoughts from the tendency to mere formalism, and reminds them that earnestness and faith were the grand requisites to be kept in view. It was indeed very fitting that those words, so precious to the whole Church through long ages, should be uttered once near the beginning, and once again, near the close of our Saviour's ministry.

IV. THE DISCOURSE ON BLASPHEMY, Matt. xii. 22—45 ; Luke xi. 14—35.

These two passages, from their great resemblance, are held by most harmonists to refer to the same event. But besides the utter dislocation of St. Luke's narrative which this view requires, there are other reasons which seem to be decisive against it.

The order appears thus in St. Matthew. First, one who was possessed, blind and dumb, is brought to Jesus, and healed. The Pharisees, upon this, charge him with casting out devils by Beelzebub. He defends himself from the charge, and warns them of the fearful guilt of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. They next ask him for a sign, and he answers them by an allusion to Jonah and the Queen of Sheba, and closes by the parable of the unclean spirit, and the solemn threatening, "Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation."

The order is different in St. Luke. First, Jesus casts out a devil from one "possessed and dumb," and the people wonder at the cure. Some of the crowd then charge him with casting out devils by Beelzebub, and others demand a sign. He defends himself from that charge, and adds the parable of the unclean spirit. A woman from the crowd praises him, and he briefly replies. The multitudes crowd together, and he then replies to the demand for a sign, and closes by another parable, of the lighted candle, with a final caution and encouragement. While he yet spake, we are told in one case, that his mother and brethren came to call him, and in the other, that a Pharisee asked him to dine, and our Lord instantly complied with the request.

The occurrence, in the two first gospels, has its place clearly fixed ; since the parable of the Sower, as each of them states, followed on the same day. Now St. Luke has given the same parable, and after the many proofs that he was acquainted with the two other gospels, it must be highly improbable, if the event were the same, that he should thus have torn it away entirely from its true historical connexion. But there are other dif-

ferences beside. The demoniac in St. Matthew was both blind and dumb. Its peculiarity lay in the triple cure at the same moment. Even in the very same gospel, another cure is mentioned, "of a dumb man possessed with a devil." Matt. ix. 32—34 ; and it adds that, "when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake, and the people wondered ; but the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils." Again, we learn from St. Mark, that the child, who was healed after the Transfiguration, "had a dumb spirit." Hence we have repeated instances of dumbness being healed along with dispossession, but only one in which blindness was cured at the same time. This peculiar combination seems to have been one reason why St. Matthew records the cure at length, with the discourse that immediately followed. But the cure in St. Luke was one of dumbness alone, with possession ; for if blindness had been cured at the same time, this would have been more remarkable than the other part of the cure, and would not have been omitted. There can be no doubt, from comparing the three gospels, that cases of the dispossession of a dumb spirit were very numerous. If the present one is distinct, four will have been actually specified, two in St. Matthew ix. 32—34. xii. 21—24, one in St. Mark ix. 17, and one here in St. Luke also.

Again, the wonder of the people, and the charge of casting out devils by Beelzebub, were events which frequently occurred. They are mentioned by St. Matthew as clearly in the instance where no discourse is recorded, as in the dispossession of the blind and dumb. The surprise at our Lord's miracles is of perpetual recurrence, and the other circumstance, or one closely akin to it, is alluded to in the Commission of the Twelve, Matt. x. 25, as one standing feature of our Lord's ministry. The demand for a sign is also frequent, being mentioned twice by St. Matthew, and twice on distinct occasions, by St. John, besides this passage, and it is referred to by St. Paul as the characteristic temptation of the Jewish people. Hence the occurrence of a

dispossession during the last journey, along with such a demand for a sign, cannot involve the slightest improbability.

The order of the two discourses is clearly different, and in neither case is a transposition possible without violence. In St. Matthew the charge of a conspiracy with Satan is first made and answered, then the demand for a sign is made by the Scribes and Pharisees and repelled in its turn, while the parable of the unclean spirit, and the consequent warning, terminate the whole. In St. Luke the charge and the demand are first made together, and the charge is repelled, with the parable of the unclean spirit at the close. The exclamation of the woman is then interposed, and presently, the people gathering more thickly together, the demand for a sign is answered, and the reply closed by a new parable, enforcing the need of spiritual discernment. Thus the passage in St. Matthew ends with a stern denunciation, but the one in St. Luke with an affectionate warning, and a cheering encouragement to those by whom the warning should be obeyed. If the events were the same, and St. Matthew has given rightly the order of the demand for a sign, then the transposition in St. Luke, of the verses xi. 24—26, from their natural place at the close, appears unaccountable. And if the demand for a sign took place before the discourse began—the words of St. Matthew, “Then answered some of the Scribes and Pharisees, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee,” are equally unnatural, and would convey an erroneous impression of the motive which prompted them.

On the other hand, it is not in the least unlikely that when the same charge was made, and the same demand repeated by distinct parties, and on different occasions, our Lord would meet it again and again with nearly the same answer, though varied in each case according to his insight into the character and motives of those whom he addressed. If the actual resemblance between two such discourses were great, it would perhaps become still greater, when the second of them was reported by one who knew familiarly the record of the other, already given by an

Apostle and eye-witness. Instead of freely resorting to a peculiar version of his own, he might probably content himself with introducing only such changes, as were essential features of the later discourse, so that some specific cause might be discovered for each of them by a careful observer.

Again, the discourse in St. Luke is there linked inseparably with the meal in the Pharisee's house. Now the denunciations of woe, then uttered, are precisely similar to those in Matt. xxiii. A discourse which followed the same day exactly answers, in two of its parts, to the Sermon on the Mount, and to the close of the Prophecy on Mount Olivet. Hence, if resemblance proves identity, the series in St. Luke will be referred in St. Matthew to four different points of time; one at the beginning, one near the middle, and two at the very close of our Lord's ministry. Lastly, while the discourse on blasphemy in St. Matthew was followed by the first public teaching in parables, that in St. Luke is itself connected with three parables, and with a clear intimation, xii. 41, that this mode of teaching was now quite familiar to the disciples. On all these accounts, the events must have been distinct. And since this is the case where the verbal resemblance is perhaps the most extensive and complete, the same conclusion may be extended to other passages, in which the same feature appears.

V. The comparison of these parallel sayings, now that they are shewn to be really distinct, will further evince the later composition of the third gospel. In six or seven instances, St. Luke will thus be seen to have omitted sayings of our Lord, on their first occurrence, though he gives the event which occasioned them, and to have reserved them for a later time, when they were repeated once more. The mention of the harvest and the labourers, the woe on the Galilean cities, and its attendant thanksgiving, the declaration of the disciples' blessedness in seeing the works of Christ, the discourse on Blasphemy, the parables of the Leaven and Mustard-seed, the warning against hypocrisy, the woe on those who cause offences, the rebuke on

those who neglect the signs of the times, are all examples of this usage. If St. Luke wrote after the two others, this circumstance may be very simply explained. He omits these particulars in his earlier chapters, because he purposed to introduce them on their later recurrence, in the original portion of his own narrative. The solution applies even to those cases, where the order is the reverse. These relate exclusively to some parts of the discourses in Passion Week, a full record of which was essential in every gospel. Hence in the case of duplicate events, one in Passion Week, and the other in the course of the general ministry, it is the later which would be likely to be first recorded. Two such instances are the anointing at Bethany, compared with Luke vii. 36—50, and the denunciations in Matt. xxiii. compared with Luke xi, xiii.

In one passage this peculiar relation of the two histories may be seen very clearly. The accounts of the Baptist's message, Matt. xi. 2—19 ; Luke vii. 19—23, have a minute verbal correspondence. Three passages, however, of that chapter are omitted by St. Luke, and appear, with little or no change, in this later portion of his gospel.

From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent seize upon it.

For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

Woe to thee, Chorazin ! woe to thee, Bethsaida ! for if the mighty works that have been done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, in sackcloth and ashes.

But I say unto you,

It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you.

And thou, Capernaum, exalted unto heaven, shall be thrust down to hell.

The law and the prophets were until John, since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man is pressed into it.

Woe to thee, Chorazin ! woe to thee, Bethsaida ! for if the mighty works that have been done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment, than for you.

And thou, Capernaum, exalted unto heaven, shall be thrust down to hell.

For if the mighty works done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

At that time, Jesus answered and said,

I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes; even so, Father! for so it seemed good in thy sight.

All things are delivered unto me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said,

I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes; even so, Father! for so it seemed good in thy sight.

All things are delivered unto me of my Father, and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son; and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

The passage Matt. xi. 2—11, 16—19, is found in Luke vii. 19—35, with scarcely a verbal change, and with its historical place clearly defined. The three portions, however, which intervene and follow, xi. 12, 13, 20—23, 25—27, are omitted there, and appear with little change, on two distinct occasions near the close of our Lord's ministry, Luke xvi. 16. x. 13—15, 21, 22. Yet the whole discourse in St. Matthew is linked together by a natural connexion. We may therefore conclude that St. Luke has made use of the earlier record, but has purposely omitted sayings that were afterwards repeated, to record them in their place at a later period of the history.

VI. The title of our Lord in these chapters, Luke ix. 51—xviii. 6, when compared with the two other gospels, is a clear sign of a later composition. In St. Matthew, the name Jesus is always used, when the writer speaks in his own person. In St. Mark the same rule is observed, except in the last verse alone. The same is true of the earlier part of the third gospel, where it runs parallel with the others, though here there are two or three exceptions. The first is in the healing of the Paralytic, Luke v. 17. "And the power of the Lord was present to heal them." The second, in the raising of the widow's son, vii. 13.

“ And when the Lord saw her he had compassion on her.” The third, which is more doubtful, since the clause is rejected by Griesbach and Scholz, occurs in the same chapter. “ And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation ? ” It may also be observed that the first exception appears, where a fresh detail is introduced, and the second, in the narrative of an event which is not found in the two other gospels.

When we pass on, however, to the latter part of the gospel, and especially to this middle portion, where it stands alone, there is a remarkable variation of style. The title, Lord, is substituted thirteen times for the simple and purely historical name, Jesus. Of these instances no less than eight are found in the report of the last journey, peculiar to St. Luke ; while of the five others, three occur in the narrative of events which are found in this gospel alone.

The substitution, in the Church of Christ, of this title of reverence for the historical name, Jesus, would plainly be gradual, and would probably be more rapid in their case, who had never seen their Lord in the flesh, while it must have been completely established, as we infer from the Epistles of St. Paul, in the course of one generation. Hence the contrast in this respect is a clear sign that St. Luke wrote later than the two others ; or else that his gospel, while later than St. Matthew's, was, less than that of St. Mark, moulded by the information of a present eye-witness. And since, even in those chapters, where the title of honour is most largely used, the name Jesus occurs three times as often, this will be a further presumption that the absolute date lay within the limits of the first generation.

It may seem at first to interfere with this argument, that St. John, whom all allow to have written later than St. Luke, uses the name 250 times, and the title only seventeen times in his whole gospel. But one simple remark will remove the difficulty, which this fact might seem to create. St. John was himself an eye-witness, and the most intimate personal companion of our Lord in the days of his flesh. His language, therefore, whenever he wrote,

would be moulded by the vividness of his own personal recollections, and also by a constant recollection of the express object of his work, which was to bear witness that Jesus was the Christ. And hence the very fact of the title being introduced seven times, which appears only twice in St. Mark, and seven times in St. Luke, excluding this middle and peculiar portion, agrees well with the later date of the fourth gospel, when due allowance has been made for the difference between a younger convert and the beloved Apostle of the Lord.

It may be observed that the part of the gospel, where this frequent use of the title appears, commences with the mission of the Seventy Disciples, and closes xviii. 6, where the narrative reunites itself to those of St. Mark and St. Matthew. Now it seems highly probable that, during most of the incidents thus recorded, not only the Twelve Apostles, but the greater part of the Seventy Disciples, would be present. The Evangelist might therefore have access to many believers who could recount the incidents and discourses of these last months of our Lord's ministry, though they had not been present through its whole course; while the same circumstance would render it less needful that these incidents should be recorded early, from the greater number of surviving witnesses.

The last portion of the gospels to be compared, extends from the blessing of the little children, to their close, and the ascension of our Lord into heaven. Here there is a general agreement in the events which are recorded, and in their arrangement, but several minor variations. From the extent of the previous remarks it will be enough here to select three particulars for comparison, the request of the ruler, the cure of the blind man, and the gifts to the treasury.

VII. The account of the Ruler's question occurs thus in the three gospels:—

And behold, one came
and said to him,

Good master, what good
thing shall I do, that I
may have eternal life ?

And he said unto him,

Why callest thou me
good ? there is none good
but one, even God : but
if thou wilt enter into life,
keep the commandments.

He saith unto him,
Which ?

Jesus said, Thou shalt
not kill,
thou shalt not commit
adultery,

thou shalt not steal,
thou shalt not bear false
witness,

honour thy father and
mother,

and, thou shalt love thy
neighbour as thyself.

The young man saith
to him,

All these have I kept
from my youth.

What lack I yet ?

Jesus said to him,

If thou wilt be perfect,
go, sell that thou hast,
and give to the poor.

And thou shalt have
treasure in heaven, and
come, follow me.

And when he was gone
forth into the way, one
ran and, kneeling to him,
questioned him,

Good Master, what
shall I do, that I may
inherit eternal life ?

But Jesus said unto
him,

Why callest thou me
good ? none is good but
one, even God.

Thou knowest the com-
mandments.

Do not commit adul-
tery,
do not kill,

do not steal,
do not bear false wit-
ness,

honour thy father and
thy mother.

And he answering,
said to him,

Master, all these have
I kept from my youth.

And Jesus, beholding
him, loved him, and said
to him,

One thing thou lackest,
go, sell whatsoever thou
hast, and give to the poor.

And thou shalt have
treasure in heaven, and
come, follow me, having
taken the cross.

And a certain ruler
questioned him, saying,

Good Master, what
having done, shall I in-
herit eternal life ?

And Jesus said to him,

Why callest thou me
good ? none is good but
one, even God.

Thou knowest the com-
mandments.

Do not commit adul-
tery,
do not kill,

do not steal,
do not bear false wit-
ness,

honour thy father and
thy mother.

And he said,

All these have I kept
from my youth.

Now when Jesus heard
those things, he said unto
him,

Yet one thing is want-
ing to thee, sell all what-
soever thou hast, and
distribute to the poor.

And thou shalt have
treasure in heaven, and
come, follow me.

But when the young man heard the saying, he went away sorrowing, for he had great possessions.	But he, being sad at the saying, went away sorrowing, for he had great possessions.	But when he heard these things, he became very sorrowful, for he was rich exceedingly.
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All the three gospels have here a close, and in some clauses, a verbal agreement, but St. Mark and St. Luke agree more exactly with each other, than with St. Matthew. This is apparent in the opening clause—‘thou knowest the commandments’—in the form of the precepts, where $\mu\eta$ with the conjunctive replaces the future tense of St. Matthew,—in their order, adultery being named before murder,—and in the absence of the precept—‘thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.’ It appears further in the omission of the inquiry, “What lack I yet?” and the substitution of the answer, “One thing thou lackest;” and thus extends to six minute particulars. It seems almost certain, then, that one has made use of the other’s narrative. There are, however, two or three slight changes, which seem to imply that St. Luke has revised the other account. The construction, in the third line, is rendered more classical. In the answer of Jesus, a compound verb is used, which is more expressive, and the two last clauses are expressed in a more elegant form. These changes, though slight, all agree with the view that St. Luke wrote after the two other Evangelists, and freely combined their statements with his own materials.

VIII. The Cure of the Blind near Jericho is an event, in which the gospels have been thought to contradict each other, and various explications have been proposed. Matt. xxv. 29—34. Mark x. 46—52. Luke xviii. 35—43.

St. Matthew here speaks of two blind men, and the two others of one only. St. Matthew and St. Mark place the cure, when Jesus had passed through Jericho; St. Luke, on his approach to it, before he had entered the town. Several expedients to reconcile them have been proposed; that the verb in St. Luke means simply “to be near,” or that our Lord made short excursions from the city and returned, or that there were two towns of the

name, an old and a new, at a very short distance. It has been supposed, again, that St. Matthew, by an idiomatic license, has mentioned two blind men, when it was really one, attended by his guide; that St. Mark has rectified the number, and St. Luke restored it more accurately to its true place, just before the entrance into Jericho.

A simpler solution, adopted by Origen, and more recently by Lightfoot and Greswell, is that St. Luke and St. Mark record two successive cures, which St. Matthew, from their similarity, and nearness in place and time, had grouped together. The hypothesis that the first Evangelist has mentioned the blind man and his conductor, as two persons cured, is harsh in itself, and directly opposed to the statement, Luke xviii. 36. It would be needless for him to inquire from strangers, if he had a conductor by his side, and the illustration of his faith and hope, in St. Mark, that he cast away his garment, would lose its force entirely. On the other hand the license of reporting the two cures, as if they were at the same moment, when they were successive, is in full harmony with many examples in the first gospel. St. Mark, also, has given the name of the blind man, whose cure he reports on leaving Jericho—Bartimeus, the son of Timeus. But St. Luke, though he retains the name of Jairus, which Mark has introduced, has no name in the cure he records, on the approach of Jesus to Jericho. Let us suppose that Matthew has really grouped two cures into one, and placed them where the second alone, strictly speaking, occurred. It is agreeable to the constant rule of St. Mark, that he should rectify this departure from exact order, and mention only the second cure, the subject of which was better known, and probably still living among the Christians of Judea. If St. Luke wrote still later, it is equally natural that he should record in its place the earlier cure, which St. Matthew, in his brief account, had joined with that of Bartimeus and connected with the departure of Jesus from Jericho.

IX. The Casting of the Gifts into the Treasury is another proof of the relation between the second and third gospels.

K. And he said unto them in his teaching,

Beware of the scribes, that love to walk in robes, and greetings in the markets, and chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost couches in feasts, who devour widows' houses, and for shew make long prayers; these shall receive a greater damnation.

And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury, and many rich men cast in much.

And there came also a certain poor widow, and cast in two mites, which are a farthing.

And he called to him his disciples, and said,

Verily I say to you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than all who have cast into the treasury.

For all they did cast in from their abundance, but she from her want hath cast in all whatever she had, even all her living.

L. Thên, in the audience of all his people, he said to his disciples,

Take heed of the scribes, that love to walk in robes, and love greetings in the markets, and chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost couches in feasts, who devour widows' houses, and for shew make long prayers; these shall receive a greater damnation.

And looking up, he saw rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.

And he saw also a certain poor widow, casting in thither two mites.

And he said,

Of a truth I say to you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than all.

For all these out of their abundance cast into the offerings of God, but she, out of her want, hath cast in all the living that she had.

The resemblance here is the more striking; because the first part is only an abridgment of the actual discourse, as recorded fully by St. Matthew, and the other incident is not found in his gospel. There is an entire verbal agreement in the first part, varied only by three slight changes. The insertion of *φιλονεικων* removes one solecism from St. Mark's style, and the substitution of *οἱ θέλουσι* for *οἱ θέλοντες* removes another. St. Luke, then, has adopted the words of his predecessor, and simply adapted them to the ear of more classic readers.

The changes in the latter part are more numerous. The opening statement is freed by St. Luke from a repetition that might seem inelegant. The Hebrew word, Amen, is replaced by its

Greek equivalent, *αληθως*, while the Roman synonym for two mites is not given. Another pleonasm of the verb and its participle is removed, a more expressive term, *απαντες*, introduced, and the nature of the gifts expounded for Gentile readers, "the offerings of God." The closing sentence also receives a more finished structure. Every feature is thus explained, if we suppose that the third Evangelist has adopted, and slightly revised, the statement of the second, so as to adapt the style to a more classical taste. The independence of the accounts, without something like a miracle, is incredible, while every variation indicates that St. Luke has given us the later narrative.

Thus, finally, it results from the whole inquiry, by a great variety of evidence, that the three first gospels have a close mutual relation to each other, that each later Evangelist used the work of his predecessor, but combined it with original sources of information, and that the gospel of St. Luke is really the third, not only as to its actual place in the Canon, but in order of publication.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE HISTORICAL RELATIONS OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

It was a maxim of the Divine law, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word should be established. The direct bearing of this principle on the mutual relation of the gospel witnesses, does not appear to have been sufficiently observed. To satisfy this rule, it would be needful that a second Evangelist should repeat and ratify the testimony of the first, with regard to all the main events contained in the earlier history. When two witnesses had thus been secured, a third would not be absolutely necessary, but still desirable. Hence it would be natural that a third Evangelist should give his testimony to many of the same events, which had been reported by the others ; but not so necessary to confirm the whole, as to exclude the admission of a large variety of fresh and original information. There would then be little need to multiply further testimonies, when enough had been already supplied. The chief object of a fourth writer would naturally be, to communicate further information. The second gospel would be confirmatory of the first ; the third in part confirmatory, in part supplementary, to the first and second ; the fourth, almost entirely, a supplement to its three predecessors. And such precisely is the relation which the gospel of St. John sustains to the three others.

This very feature, however, of the distinctness of its events from those previously recorded, has concurred with its fulness of

doctrinal statement, and the simple majesty of its style, to conceal from many readers the internal evidence of its historical reality. And hence the mythical theorists have sought to disparage it, as a mere dream of high-wrought fancy, designed to glorify Jesus, with hardly any ground-work in his actual history. It has been endeavoured to prove its statements contradictory to those of the other Evangelists, and thus either to set it aside as a Christian legend, or to throw doubt on their consenting testimony, and involve the whole life of our Lord in utter uncertainty and confusion. It becomes, then, of great importance to unfold the supplementary character of this gospel, and to shew that the indirectness of its relation to the others only deepens the force of their combined evidence, by a series of undesigned and exact coincidences, the more impressive because they lie beneath the surface, and entirely escape the notice of a superficial and careless reader.

On the first and general view of St. John's gospel, we should be ready to suppose that it was a doctrinal, rather than an historical supplement to the others, and that the writer, occupied with those sublime discourses of our Lord, and those wonderful glimpses of his Divine glory, had lost sight entirely of the lower elements of time and place, which would ensure its authority as real history. But whether we ascribe it to a conscious purpose, or to the secret overruling of the Spirit of God, we shall see that both objects are harmonized together, and that there is a striking unity and completeness in its purely historical relations to the other gospels.

I. The three first gospels agree in confining themselves, almost entirely, to the record of our Lord's ministry in Galilee. This transfer of its scene from Judea stands prominent in the opening of St. Matthew, and is justified by the direct appeal to an inspired prophecy. 'The land of Zabulon and of Naphthali, by the way of the sea, in Galilee of the Gentiles,' was the place appointed for the first dawning of this light from heaven. The only exception is that of the last journey to Jerusalem, which

they all record very fully in its closing portion, because the substance of the whole gospel was comprised in the atoning death and glorious resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

It might be inferred, however, from several passing hints, even in these gospels, that our Saviour's ministry was not entirely confined to Galilee, and that he paid more than one visit to Jerusalem. To say nothing of the presumption from the law of Moses, which prescribed attendance at the yearly feasts, the passages Matt. xxiii. 37. Luke xiii. 34, are alone decisive on this point. Accordingly, the fourth gospel derives its historical unity from this systematic omission in the others, and records distinctly, and almost exclusively, the ministry of Jesus in Judea and Jerusalem.

There are only two exceptions to this general law, with regard to the theatre of the fourth gospel, in chap. vi., xxi. And in these very exceptions the supplementary character may be clearly traced. The scene in both of them is the sea of Galilee, to which the prophecy of Isaiah referred our Saviour's ministry, in the foresight of his rejection at Jerusalem, the natural seat and centre of Messiah's kingdom. The occasion, in each instance, illustrates the principle on which the transfer was made. In the former case, it was near the Jewish Passover, when our Lord would have gone up to Jerusalem, unless restrained by the murderous malice of the Jews. In the latter instance, it was after his resurrection, when his rejection by the rulers and people of Jerusalem was complete, and when he was about to crown his ministry by the last solemn message to his Apostles and all his disciples, on a mountain in Galilee.

II. The first interval, omitted in the former gospels, extends from the close of the temptation to the return into Galilee, when our Lord's public ministry in that province began. The fourth gospel punctually supplies the intervening events; and yet the links are so simple and inartificial, that scarcely one reader in a hundred would observe, how precisely the limits tally with those of the previously omitted portion. The narrative begins with

the testimony of the Baptist to Jesus, occasioned by a message of inquiry on the part of the Pharisees, and no statement could appear more widely removed from any purpose of mere chronology. The writer then continues :—"The next day John seeth Jesus coming to him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. . . And I knew him not, but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God."

From these words it is plain that the Baptism of Jesus was now past. But the other gospels tell us that the Temptation followed immediately, and since Jesus was now on the banks of the Jordan, and the next day but one, verses 35, 44, returned into Galilee, the Temptation also must plainly have been ended. And further, since the scene of John's baptism was clearly on the route between the wilderness and Galilee, it is plain that Jesus had just returned from the wilderness, when the Baptist gave this noble testimony to his character, as the Lamb of God. And hence it follows that the message of the Pharisees, with which the gospel begins its history, must have been on the last day of the Temptation, or else the very day after its close.

From this point four successive days are marked, till a return into Galilee, which might at first sight be confounded with the return in the former gospels. But the writer does not leave us long exposed to this mistaken impression. He mentions the marriage in Cana on the third day, a short abode at Capernaum, a visit to Jerusalem at the Passover, and then a ministry of Jesus in the land of Judea, while John also was baptizing at Enon. He then adds the brief remark—"for John was not yet cast into prison." It follows that the return into Galilee, in chap. i., was earlier than that which all the other gospels mention after John's imprisonment. And accordingly, in chap. iv., St. John mentions a second return into Galilee, occasioned by the jealousy of the Pharisees, which has all the features required by the statements

of the other Evangelists. Having conducted our Lord to Cana, where a second miracle occurs, the writer abruptly suspends his continuous narrative just before the visit to Nazareth, mentioned by St. Luke, and that later abode at Capernaum, which is recorded alike in all the three gospels. The dovetailing of the two narratives is thus complete.

III. The next chapter is introduced with the words, "After these things there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem." The comparison with other passages of the gospel yields of itself a strong presumption that this feast was a Passover. For in every other case the feast is specified by name, whether the Passover, the Feast of Tabernacles, or the Dedication. Hence the simplest reason for the omission here will be, that the feast was virtually specified, in the view of the writer ; since he has repeatedly named the Passover, and referred to it by the general title, the feast, and hitherto has alluded to no other. Thus in chap. iv., it is said of the Galileans, "they also went up to the feast." Also it is clear from the other gospels that there was an interval of two years between the Passover which preceded the teaching in Galilee, and that which followed the miracle of the five thousand. Hence it results naturally that this feast was the very next Passover, and that St. John notes our Lord's attendance, just as he notices the reason why he forbore to attend on its next recurrence.

Now there is here an indirect coincidence with the other gospels. For the main feature of the account is the deep resentment of the Jews against our Lord, for an alleged breach of the Sabbath ; and from this time the Evangelist dates a systematic persecution. But in St. Luke, we find the same controversy renewed on a second-first Sabbath, or the Sabbath next after the Passover, and then continued on another Sabbath, when a council was held how they might destroy him, and Jesus withdrew to the sea, to avoid their malice. The historical agreement, though far from self-evident, is thus perfect in its kind. With the second year, a stage of more deliberate and malicious opposition

had begun, and the main excuse of it, in the eyes of the Pharisees, was our Lord's supposed breach of the Sabbath, and impious claim of Divine honour.

IV. The Miracle of the Five Thousand is the only event, before Passion Week, which is common to St. John with the other gospels. It serves thus to bind the fourth gospel into close historic unity with the others. But it also supplies a link of the chronology, for St. John alone tells us distinctly that the Passover was then near at hand. The main object, however, seems to be, that he may introduce the striking discourse in the synagogue of Capernaum. But besides several minute particulars, such as an eye-witness alone would be likely to give, there is at the close a striking indirect agreement with the other gospels. "Have not I chosen you twelve? and one of you is a devil." No allusion has been made in this gospel to the selection of the Twelve Apostles, but the statement of the other three Evangelists is thus confirmed, as a notorious truth. The agreement is indeed still more complete, since the other gospels state that the Twelve had just returned from their first public mission, before the miracle of the five thousand. There is thus a secret, but emphatic appeal, to the recent proof of his especial choice, which our Lord had given them in that solemn embassy.

V. The next portion of the gospel relates to a visit to Jerusalem at the feast of Tabernacles, viii. 1—x. 21, in the last year of our Saviour's ministry. Now, from the language of the Evangelist, vi. 4, vii. 1, it results clearly that an interval of eighteen months occurred between this and the former visit. And this evidently agrees with the statements in the other gospels, who represent Galilee as the main scene of our Lord's public labours. In fact, St. John, whose purpose is to record the visits to Jerusalem, is led here, from the long interval between them, to recount the miracle and attendant discourse, which happened at the time when such a visit would naturally have occurred, and then to specify at the close the reason why Jesus still abode in Galilee.

During this last year, after the Transfiguration, there is an

hiatus in the two first gospels, and distinct allusions to a transfer of the ministry from Galilee, Matt. xvii. 22. The fourth gospel concurs with this view. For it mentions the presence of Jesus at the feast of Tabernacles (October), and of Dedication (December), and then remarks that "he went away again beyond Jordan, to the place where John was baptizing at the first, and there abode." The simplest construction is, that he had previously retired thither after the feast of Tabernacles, and now returned again after the feast of Dedication. There was thus a considerable interval, from October to the end of December, during which the ministry of Jesus was in Perea and not in Galilee, a transfer which is probably intended, Matt. xix. 1. Mark x. 1.

VI. The Resurrection of Lazarus is like a distinct episode in the fourth gospel. Yet even here we have several links of historical connection with the three other Evangelists. "The village of Martha and Mary" is a clear and definite allusion to the passage, Luke x. 38—42; while the words that follow are an allusion, not less clear, to the account given by St. Matthew and St. Mark of the anointing in Bethany, joined with the promise to Mary of perpetual honour. The miracle itself, when compared with the two others, of the widow's son and the ruler's daughter, forms a climax of Divine power; and the language of Jesus, "our friend Lazarus sleepeth," finds its exact parallel in the words of the three other gospels, "Give place, for the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth." The narrative is suspended, when our Lord arrives at Ephraim, on the southern border of Samaria, and is resumed when he reaches Bethany, six days before the last Passover. There is thus room for the successive events recorded by St. Luke, and in part by the other Evangelists; a journey through Samaria, a mission of the Seventy in Galilee, and a circuit through Galilee, along the border of Samaria and Galilee, and then through Perea, and by way of Jericho, to Bethany and Jerusalem.

VII. In the accounts of the Resurrection, the fourth gospel equally confirms the previous narratives, and supplies their

omissions. St. Mark had stated that Jesus appeared first of all to Mary Magdalene, and here we have a distinct account of that appearance. St. Luke had stated that Peter ran to the sepulchre, after a report from the women. We are taught here that the report was brought by Mary Magdalene, and that John accompanied Peter in his visit to the tomb. St. Luke had recounted the appearance to the eleven the same evening; and here a varied report of it is given. We have then an appearance, a week later, which is peculiar to this gospel, and relates to the Apostle Thomas, of whom no mention is made in any of the earlier gospels, except in the list of the Twelve. Last of all, St. Matthew had recorded briefly the main appearance of Jesus on a mountain in Galilee, while St. Mark and St. Luke mention only those in or near Jerusalem. And the fourth gospel confirms and completes their statements, by exhibiting the Apostles in Galilee after the resurrection, and recording an appearance to seven of them, probably just before the public appearance to all the Twelve and the five hundred brethren. At the same time, the account may be viewed in another light, as a supplement to St. Luke, since the two miraculous draughts are beautifully related to each other, both in their strong resemblance and partial contrast. In the former, the net is broken; in the latter no injury is sustained from the immense draught. In the former, Peter offers the prayer, "Depart from me," in the other he casts himself into the sea, in his ardent desire to be near his Lord and Saviour. The contrast, as well as the resemblance to the former miracle, is very striking, and serves to complete their common significance.

The fourth gospel, then, although the events which it records are supplementary to the other gospels, contains numerous links of connexion, which evince their common truth, and bind the whole into one harmonious and consistent narrative of the chief events in the life of Jesus.

BOOK II.

INTRODUCTION.

ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE GOSPELS.

THE mutual relation of the Gospels, established by the internal evidence, is an important help towards fixing the date of their publication, and thereby proving their just claim to the character of authentic history. The third gospel and the Book of Acts were both addressed to the same person, Theophilus, whose name appears in the preface to each of them, and are plainly two successive works of the same author. Hence, if we can ascertain the date of the book of Acts, it will follow that three of the gospels must have been published earlier; and so much earlier, that the first was in circulation before the second was written, and the first and second before the composition of the third. We have now to determine the chronology of the book of Acts, its date and authorship, and the probable occasion when it was published; and we may then infer, by a comparison with its contents, the probable occasion and date of the three earlier gospels. The authenticity of St. John's gospel is directly proved by external evidence, of the strongest kind, and its authority is almost independent of the date when it was written. In the present book this inquiry has therefore been omitted, as less important; but the objections urged against it will be examined afterwards, and its Apostolic origin confirmed, so as to form a keystone to the arch of historical testimony.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS.

BEFORE we can ascertain the date of the book of Acts, it is needful to determine, as nearly as possible, the chronology of the events themselves. Such an inquiry is interesting for its own sake, and serves to illustrate and confirm the reality of the whole narrative. There is a divergence of six or seven years, even among recent chronologers, which calls for a renewed and careful examination of the evidence.

The Ascension of our Lord, and the Release of St. Paul from his imprisonment at Rome, are the limiting events of the history. Their dates, according to Usher, with whom Professor Hug agrees, are A.D. 33, and A.D. 65, while others place the Apostle's release one or two years later. Mr. Greswell fixes the limits at A.D. 30. and A.D. 61, while Dr. Burton contracts the whole within a narrower compass, A.D. 33—58. Several writers, however, as Tillemont, Pearson, Tomline and Townsend, adopt the intermediate date A.D. 63, for the close of the history. There is a similar variety in the date assigned to the council, Acts xv. as will appear from the following scheme :—

CRUCIFIXION.

March A.D. 29.	Ideler, Browne, Benson, Clinton.
April A.D. 30.	Africanus, Greswell.
March A.D. 31.	Epiphanius, Petavius, Hales, Burton.
April A.D. 33.	Scaliger, Usher, Cuninghame.
April A.D. 34.	Sir I. Newton.

THE COUNCIL, Acts xv.

A.D. 46. Dr. Burton.

48. Browne, Greswell.

49. Petavius, Pearson, Lardner, Michaelis, Townsend.

52. Usher, Hug.

RELEASE OF ST. PAUL.

A.D. 58. Dr. Burton, Browne.

61. Greswell.

63. Pearson, Tillemont, Townsend.

65. Usher, Hug.

I. The first question relates to the date of the Crucifixion and Ascension. This, however, is more closely connected with the chronology of the gospels; since the notes of time in Acts i—vi. are so few, that a difference of two or three years in the Ascension would have little influence in fixing the date of the later events after Saul's conversion. The date of Eusebius and Usher, A.D. 33, has been very generally received in the last century. But recent chronologers, with one or two exceptions, incline to an earlier date. Ideler, Benson, Browne and Clinton, place it A.D. 29, Dr. Jarvis in A.D. 28, Mr. Greswell, and Foster, in A.D. 30, and Dr. Hales and Dr. Burton in A.D. 31.

The date of Africanus and Greswell, April A.D. 30, seems to be established, with high probability, by the following reasons. First, the death of Herod the Great, from the direct and indirect statements of Josephus, may be assigned to the beginning of A.C. 3. This agrees with the length of his reign, as twice mentioned, and computed from a double origin, with the reign and deposition of Archelaus, the years of Philip the tetrarch, and the date of the eclipse, if we suppose that Herod's disease was lingering, and lasted about a whole year. The birth of our Lord must have been nearly a year earlier, and may thus be placed between the limits December A.C. 5, and April A.C. 4. The gospels of St. Luke and St. John, compared, imply that thirty years of our Lord's life were complete at the Passover, John ii.

12, or shortly before it. This will fix it, consequently, to A.D. 27. And this agrees with Luke iii. 1, if the years of Tiberius are reckoned from his proconsular dominion, or supreme power over the provinces. Now for this reckoning we have an exact precedent in Scripture, in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, whose reign is dated two years earlier, in Judea, than by the Canon of Ptolemy, or by Daniel at Babylon. Again, the gospels imply an interval of just three years from that Passover to the Crucifixion. One of these closes at the time of the second-first Sabbath, Luke vi. 1; another soon after the miracle of the five thousand, John vi. 1; and the last at the Crucifixion, which is thus referred to April A.D. 30. Now this date satisfies also the test from the Passover week-day, if the feast were fixed by the phasis of the moon. For if the moon was visible when twenty-two hours old, the Passover-day would be Thursday, which seems to have been the real day of its occurrence. If, however, the day were Friday, which many have inferred from the fourth gospel, we should only have to suppose that the new moon was not visible, so near to the extreme limit of her possible appearance. This date differs also very little from the year of the Gemini, A.D. 29, which has the most traditional evidence in its favour; and the interval of forty years, to the fall of Jerusalem, has many analogies in Jewish history.

The dates of the Roman emperors, within the Apostolic period, are as follows:—

Tiberius, Aug. 19, A.D. 14. Nero, Sep. 13, A.D. 54.

Caligula, March 16, A.D. 37. Galba, June, A.D. 68.

Claudius, Jan., A.D. 41. Fall of Jerusalem, Aug. A.D. 70.

One writer only, Dr. Jarvis, has recently departed from these well-established dates, placing them all one year higher; but his reasoning is erroneous in every part, and the usual chronology rests on a variety of proofs, which amount to absolute demonstration. We may infer from these dates, that the history, Acts xii—xvii. was included within the reign of Claudius, or Jan. A.D. 41—September, A.D. 54; but beyond this general limit, they

yield us no direct information of the exact time when each event occurred. Our data must be borrowed mainly from the history of Josephus, though one important link is supplied by St. Paul himself, in the Epistle to the Galatians.

The time of the death of Herod Agrippa is the first and cardinal date. The second is the interval of fourteen years, Gal. ii. 1, either from the conversion of St. Paul, or from his first visit to Jerusalem, until some later visit, of which several particulars are there given. When this double ambiguity has been removed, a third datum is still requisite, in order to decide how much of the interval lies before, and how much follows after, the death of Herod, previously ascertained. And here the adjustment is constructive, and requires us to combine several data, each of them separately inadequate, before we can arrive at a correct decision.

II. The Death of Herod Agrippa, Acts xii, furnishes the most definite mark of time in the whole narrative. It may be fixed, by the express testimony of Josephus, to A.D. 44. Since, however, Mr. Greswell assigns it to A.D. 43, and Dr. Burton half inclines to the same date, it is needful to vindicate the common view of nearly all chronologers by placing that testimony clearly before the reader.

First, Josephus tells us in Ant. xix. 8. 2, that Claudius, on his accession, invested Agrippa with the dominion over Judea and Samaria, in addition to the tetrarchy of Antipas, which he had received before from Caligula. After the third year of this reign was completed, he held the festival at Cæsarea, when he was smitten with disease, and died within a few days. His appointment, then, at the earliest, was January A.D. 41, and the festival must have been later than January A.D. 44. Now Peter was imprisoned at a Passover, and the history in Acts seems to imply that the audience of the Tyrians and the death of Herod were very soon after, before the return of Paul and Barnabas to Antioch. Hence the Passover must have been that of A.D. 44, and Herod's death was probably not later than the Pentecost of that year.

Again we are told (Ant. xviii. 6, 10.) that Caius invested him

with the tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias, soon after his own accession, or April—June, A.D. 37. The next year Agrippa sailed to Judea. Upon this Herodias prompted Antipas to set out for Rome, in order to solicit the same title of king, and prevailed on him with difficulty, after some delay. He sailed evidently the next year, or A.D. 39, and met the Emperor at Baïæ in Campania, where Caius is known from other evidence to have been, not long before his birth-day, August 31, A.D. 39. Antipas and Herodias were then banished into Gaul, and the tetrarchies were given to Herod Agrippa. Claudius, on his accession, confirmed to him this government, and added Judea and Samaria. (Ant. xix. 5. 1.)

Now Josephus (Ant. xix. 8. 2.) places the death of Herod “in the seventh year of his reign, for he reigned four years under Caius, three of them over Philip’s tetrarchy alone, and in the fourth that of Herod was added; and besides these, he reigned three years under Claudius.” If his appointment were in May or June A.D. 37, his death, soon after the Passover A.D. 44, would be at the close of his seventh year. From May A.D. 37 to the close of A.D. 39, when tidings of the deposition of Antipas would reach Judea, are more than two and half years, or three years current. From that time to the death of Caligula would be little more than one full year, after which three full years were completed before his death.

In the Wars (ii. 11. 6.) we are told that Herod had reigned three years at his death, as he had also governed his tetrarchies three other years. Here, again, three complete years are distinctly assigned to him, after the accession of Claudius, and the only divergence is in reckoning three years, instead of four, for his previous rule. But this may be explained very simply by the fact that he sailed from Rome, and actually assumed the government, only in the second year of Caligula, or A.D. 38, whence three years only are current to the end of that Emperor’s reign.

Thus all the notes of time in Josephus evidently agree, and fix the death of Agrippa to the first half of A.D. 44, while the

book of Acts would lead us to place it not very long after the Passover. The reasoning of Mr. Greswell, by which he would place it a year earlier, involves a rejection of the express statement of Josephus, twice repeated, that three years from the accession of Claudius had been completed at the time of its occurrence.

III. The next help towards the fixation of the dates is the passage in Galatians iii. 1. We are told by St. Paul in that Epistle, that three years after his conversion he went up to Jerusalem (Acts ix. 28), and then that "after fourteen years" (*ὀκτωετων δεκατεσσαρων*) he went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus, on account of certain false brethren, who were troubling the Church at Antioch. Three questions may here be raised,—which is the visit thus referred to, whether the two intervals are successive, or both measured from the same date, and lastly, whether the years are current or complete. Since the intervals after the council at Jerusalem may be nearly determined from St. Luke's narrative, the relative dates of the whole series will be also fixed, when the above questions have been solved; but their absolute dates will vary, as more or less of the fourteen years is placed between the death of Herod and the council at Jerusalem.

Four opinions have been held with regard to the visit in Galatians, that it was the second, third, or fourth of those mentioned by St. Luke, or else a visit not recorded by him, and supposed to have been shortly before the time of the council. The view of Mr. Browne, who refers it to the second, and of Mr. Greswell, who identifies it with the fourth visit, may be disproved by a direct comparison of the letter with the history, and the only presumption in favour of Paley's hypothesis, that it was a private visit shortly before the council, vanishes on a closer examination. Three-fourths of the ablest writers agree that the visit at the time of the council Acts xv, is the one of which the Apostle is here speaking, and their opinion has been established, in the *Horæ Apostolicæ*, by the internal evidence of the passage alone.

Next, are the two periods, of three and fourteen years, successive, or do they alike date from Saul's conversion? Opinions

are much divided on this point. Petavius, Usher, Hug, Dr. Burton, adopt the former view, while Browne, Greswell and many others, prefer the latter. Even on internal grounds, the supposition of a common date for the two periods seems to me at least as probable as the other. Dr. Burton thinks, indeed, that there is no reason for supposing that St. Paul reverted in his mind to the period of his conversion, and that the word, *again*, compels us to refer back to the date of the former journey. My own impression is just the reverse. The word, *again*, would be just as applicable, whether the period were reckoned from his conversion, or from his former visit, while the scope of the passage almost requires us to refer it to the earlier event. For his object is to remind the Galatians how long he had continued, after he was commissioned by Christ, without any formal or official intercourse with the other Apostles; and thus to exalt the importance of his original call, and shew the unimportance, in a question of Apostolic authority, of that brief visit which lasted only fifteen days. Now this object would naturally lead him to date his second visit, like the first, from the time of that miraculous revelation at Damascus, which was the source of all his Apostolic authority.

When we compare the history in Acts, the reasons preponderate still more in favour of this view. Only one year is there specified between the first and third visits. The rest of the interval must be distributed into four parts,—the stay at Tarsus, the stay at Antioch before the circuit, the circuit itself, and a renewed stay after the close. Dr. Burton infers from the text that these latter amounted only to two years; and yet it is clear that the two former, so far as the text alone is concerned, do not require a longer time than the others. Yet, if we adopt his view of the period in Galatians, these four intervals amount collectively to thirteen years. Hence it is plain that the construction of the intervals in Galatians, as parallel, agrees better with the indications of St. Luke's narrative, and ought to be preferred. For the same reason, as well as from the grammatical form of the phrase,

it is probable that the years were current. It will follow that the council was held at Jerusalem in the fourteenth year from the Apostle's conversion.

We have next to inquire how large a part of this period follows the second visit, and the death of Herod. Dr. Burton confines the interval to two, while Professor Hug extends it to eight years. The chief reason assigned for the shorter period is the assumption, that the book of Acts does not naturally imply a longer space than one year to have elapsed during the circuit. But in this reasoning there is a great inconsistency. The narrative does not require a longer space than one year for the stay at Tarsus. We might even infer, from the entire silence of St. Luke about the Apostle's labours in that place, that his stay there occupied a shorter time than his extensive and laborious circuit through Asia Minor. Yet the reasoning now examined, while it would limit the circuit to four or five months, enlarges the stay at Tarsus to nine or ten years. Now since we have no record of the Apostle's labours during this period, and hardly an allusion to them, such a protraction of its length is unnatural and incredible. No distribution of the time could well do greater violence to common sense; since the historian has twice specified 'a long time' in connexion with the latter period, but never implies that the former was of any long continuance.

On the view here preferred, the whole interval from Saul's first visit to the council, exclusive of the year at Antioch, will be nine complete, or ten current years. It is natural to conclude that about half the time, which would be four complete, or five current years, followed the second visit; and this leaves five complete years for the double stay at Tarsus and Antioch before the death of Herod.

To determine the arrangement upon fuller evidence, the data from the rest of the history must be combined. Each of them separately is indefinite, and even when they have all been consulted, the result continues in some measure indeterminate. The chief events to be considered are the martyrdom of Stephen,

the commission to Damascus, the time of the escape, and of the jurisdiction of Aretas, the time of rest to the Churches, the length of the stay at Tarsus, compared with the first circuit, the succession of Roman governors, and especially the appointment and deposition of Felix, the decree of Claudius, the priesthood of Ananias, and the probable time of the liberation from Rome.

IV. The martyrdom of Stephen is the first cardinal event of the history, after the Ascension. The ancient preface of St. Paul's Epistles seems to place it in the same year, a view adopted by Petavius, Tillemont, Cave and Burton. On the other hand, the chronicle of Hippolytus, and the Recognitions of Clement, place it seven years after the Ascension, which is also the view of Mr. Greswell in his Dissertations. It seems quite incredible that, while the whole book of Acts comprises a space of more than thirty years, the first nine chapters should be contracted within the narrow limits of seven or eight months. When we consider the advice of Gamaliel, with the forbearance of the rulers to which it led, the great increase in the number of the disciples, the feud in the Church, the appointment of the seven deacons, and their labours before the trial began, we cannot reasonably allow for these events a shorter space than two years, while it is clearly possible that the period was still longer. The chief help to a decision, beyond mere conjecture, seems to be found in the reasoning that now follows.

Vitellius, as we learn from Josephus, visited Jerusalem at the Passover, A.D. 36, having superseded Pilate not long before; and then deprived Caiaphas of the high-priesthood, which he gave to Jonathan, the son of Ananias or Annas. He also granted the Jews their request, to have the priestly garments in their own custody, and wrote to Tiberius for a confirmation of that privilege. The next year he visited it again at the time of some feast, while marching against Aretas. While there, he received the news of the Emperor's death, administered the oath of fidelity to Caius, deposed Jonathan from the priesthood, and appointed Theophilus in his stead. Mr. Greswell supposes

both visits to have occurred in A.D. 37, at the Passover and Pentecost. But this is clearly erroneous, for two reasons. The interval is too short for the events which come between the visits in the history, including a return of Vitellius to Antioch, an expedition against Artabanus, the preparation for a campaign against Aretas, and a second journey by land to Jerusalem. The deposition, also, of Jonathan, so soon after his appointment, is highly improbable, and the interval from the death of Tiberius to the Pentecost is too long. For Tiberius died March 16, and the date of the Passover that year would be almost certainly April 18, and not March 18, which is three days before the equinox, and therefore a month too early. On the other hand from March 16 to April 25, which would be the close of the feast, leaves an interval just sufficient for the news to arrive, and is therefore in exact harmony with the statement of Josephus.

Now the account of Stephen's death implies an assumption of authority, by the high-priest and Sanhedrim, the very reverse of their conduct at the time of the crucifixion. In both cases there was an unanimous condemnation on a charge of blasphemy. Here, however, there is no appeal to a Roman governor, and no scruple expressed as before, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." The stoning of Stephen was the legal Jewish punishment, not the act of a mere rabble, and was done with attention to legal forms. "The witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul." We can hardly avoid the inference, that Pilate had been already removed from office, and that there was a kind of interregnum in the Roman government, which seemed to favour the Sanhedrim in their bold resumption of the power of life and death.

These indications are satisfied, if we refer the event to the high-priesthood of Jonathan. There was then no actual procurator, but only a temporary substitute. Upon a complaint of the Jews, Pilate had been sent to Rome in disgrace, and a privilege been granted them, which removed, in their eyes, a very odious badge of their own subjection. This might

embolden them to resume the prerogative of life and death, while the high priest might wish to signalize his office by some act of severity against the growing sect of the Nazarenes. This usurpation of a power, which the Romans guarded with extreme jealousy, may also account for the conduct of Vitellius, in deposing Jonathan so soon after he had appointed him. The death of Stephen, if the above reasoning be just, would fall between the Passovers of A.D. 36, and 37. If we place it about Pentecost, there is time for the mission of Philip in Samaria before the Feast of Tabernacles, which, as the greatest of all, might probably be the festival from which the eunuch was on his return.

If we consider the general scale of the history, a space of six years for the seven first chapters, or less than one fifth of the whole period, for one fourth of the whole narrative, cannot seem excessive. There are four intervals mentioned, each of which might possibly, and one of them must certainly, have been of considerable length. At the same time, since there is nothing in the text which we might not conceive, on the shortest estimate, to have been compressed into about two years, the date, Pentecost A.D. 36, seems more probable on this account than that of Mr. Greswell, who defers the event one year later, or until seven full years from the Ascension.

V. The conversion of Saul, and his first visit to Jerusalem, furnish the next imperfect criteria, as they are connected with the rule of Aretas in Damascus, and that rest of the Churches which followed the removal of the Apostle to Tarsus.

From the account of St. Luke, it seems a reasonable inference that the journey to Damascus was not less than half a year, nor more than a whole year, after Stephen's death. During the interval, Saul had continued the persecution both in Jerusalem and other towns of Judea, while Philip had preached the gospel in Samaria, Peter and John had visited them, had preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans, and returned to Jerusalem. The conversion of the eunuch, which happened in the same

interval, seems to have followed one of the main festivals. And hence, if the date proposed for the death of Stephen, the early summer of A.D. 36, be accurate, the journey to Damascus could not well be earlier than the following spring.

Now St. Paul, in his defence at Jerusalem, seems to refer to the very high priest, who gave him the commission to Damascus, as present, and still alive. Jonathan, however, who was deposed at the Passover, A. D. 37, had been slain at the time of that address, or else Ananias could not have held the office. Hence it is probable that the commission was given by Theophilus, the next high priest; and consequently after the Passover, and before the Pentecost, A. D. 37. On this view, the public ministry of St. Paul would probably begin about the time of Pentecost, or exactly seven years after the first preaching of St. Peter at Jerusalem.

The return of St. Paul to that city took place after three years, (*μετα ετη τρια*,) and the form of the phrase more naturally implies that these years were complete. And since we find that two other visits, as well as the first beginning of the gospel, were at the feast of Pentecost, this return may be assigned to that festival A. D. 40. The escape from Damascus would either be a little before, or if it preceded the journey into Arabia, one or two years earlier.

It is usually assumed that the escape from Damascus, Acts ix. 23—25, was at the close of the three years mentioned in Galatians, and immediately before the visit to Jerusalem. This, however, is by no means clear. The Apostle may have continued preaching at Damascus, till this conspiracy was formed against him, and on his escape have retired into Arabia, and after a stay of one or two years, have returned to Damascus; and then have left it finally, not so much from immediate persecution, as for the sake of intercourse with Peter, his brother Apostle. On one view the escape from Damascus would be at the close of the three years; on the other, about midway in their course, and it

seems difficult to decide, from the Acts and Epistle, which arrangement is to be preferred.

Now we are told, (2 Cor. xi. 32, 33,) that when St. Paul escaped from Damascus, the ethnarch of Aretas the king guarded the city gates, desirous to apprehend him. Since Damascus was usually under the Roman government, the question arises, when it was that Aretas held such a jurisdiction over it. Mr. Browne conceives, indeed, that this mention of the ethnarch does not imply an actual government of Aretas. But it is hard to see on what ground such a doubt can be raised. Why should the Apostle mention the ethnarch of Aretas, unless to signify that the authorities who then governed the city were arrayed against him? The guarding of the city gates, in this formal manner, would certainly require the assent of the actual governor. It must be clear from the passage that Aretas, and not the Roman president of Syria, actually held the supreme authority.

Dr. Burton, again, thinks it probable that Aretas was at war with Rome in the year A. D. 33, and might then have gained possession of Damascus. But this view is opposed to the testimony of Josephus. After the defeat of Herod, he tells us that Tiberius sent orders to Vitellius to make war upon Aretas. This war, therefore had not begun before. Vitellius was on his march in consequence of this order, and had reached Jerusalem at the time of the Emperor's death. Josephus tells us that the diviners of Aretas encouraged him not to fear the invasion, because either the Emperor or the general would die before it began. On the news of this death, Vitellius abandoned the expedition. Hence the defeat of Herod, at the earliest, would be late in A. D. 35, and the war only determined on in the close of A. D. 36, after the deposition of Pilate, and the former visit of the president to Jerusalem.

Professor Hug conceives that this retreat of Vitellius was the very occasion, on which Aretas was encouraged to seize upon Damascus. Caius, however, he observes, disposed the affairs

of Arabia before the end of his second year, when he gave a king to the Iturean Arabs, and severed other parts from Arabia. Aretas, therefore, could have held Damascus, only from the accession of Caligula to the end of his second year. The Professor refers the flight of Saul to the middle of this period, or about Pentecost A. D. 38, and places his conversion three years earlier.

Mr. Greswell, again, observes that the tetrarchy of Lysanias, of which Damascus was a part, was conferred on Agrippa by Claudius in the first year of his reign. He thinks it probable that the tetrarch had not been long dead, and that Damascus would not have fallen into other hands while the tetrarch was alive; and hence, that the last year of Caius is the one in which we have the strongest assurance that it was subject to Aretas. In this year he places the flight of Saul, and his visit to Jerusalem.

This view, it is evident, rests on a mere conjecture, since Josephus gives no account of the time when Lysanias died. He tells us, in one place, that Caius, on his accession, gave Herod Agrippa the tetrarchy of Lysanias, as well as of Philip; and in another place, that it was added by Claudius on his accession. Hence it seems not unlikely that it was only promised by Caius, and was actually received at the latter date, having been recovered, perhaps, towards the close of Caligula's reign. And hence it is not easy to define the jurisdiction of Aretas over the city, by a narrower limit than the first and last years of that Emperor, or A. D. 37—40. Hence, whether the flight of St. Paul from Damascus were at the close of three years from his conversion, or half-way in their course, it appears to satisfy this criterion, unless our knowledge of the history of Damascus were more exact. On the other hand, if his conversion were dated earlier than the summer of A. D. 34, his flight would be too early, so far as we can form a probable judgment, for the jurisdiction of Aretas to have begun.

When the Apostle had left for Tarsus, we are told that the churches had rest (εἰχον εἰρηνην) throughout all Judea and

Galilee and Samaria. The conversion of Saul alone would not account for this pause in the Jewish persecution, but it is fully explained by another concurrent event, in the attempt of Caligula to set up his statue in the temple at Jerusalem.

The time of this event may be clearly deduced from the Antiquities. After the deposition of Herod Antipas, which took place in the latter half of A. D. 39, the writer tells us that Caius managed affairs with moderation in the two first years of his reign, but afterwards began to claim Divine honours. In the next chapter he recounts his impiety, and the hazard of the Jews. First came the embassy from Alexandria, then the mission of Petronius, with orders to invade Judeaa, and erect the statue. He wintered at Ptolemais, proposing to commence the war in the spring. Then followed the petitions of the Jews, the march of Petronius to Tiberias, and their renewed petition for forty days, which Josephus places in the seed-time, but Philo, when the corn was ripe. Petronius, upon this, consented to write to the Emperor, and there followed abundant showers of rain. Soon after, the first letter of the Emperor arrived, yielding to Agrippa's request, and then the second, which threatened Petronius with death; but the vessel was outsailed by another, which brought the tidings of the death of Caligula. This took place January A. D. 41. It is therefore clear that the winter passed at Ptolemais, was the one of A. D. 39—40, and that the matter was in suspense throughout the whole of the following year. Consequently, if St. Paul visited Jerusalem, and sailed away to Tarsus, as we have inferred above, about the Passover or Pentecost of A. D. 40, it would be at the very time that Petronius and his forces were at Ptolemais, or Tiberias, when the consternation of the Jews was at its height; and hence the pause in the persecution of the Christians, at this period of the sacred history, is fully explained. We have also, conversely, a further presumption that the visit in question really belonged to one of the years A. D. 39, 40, and consequently that the conversion of the Apostle should be referred either to A. D. 36, or A. D. 37.

VI. The next question to be examined is the comparative length of the two intervals, between the first, second, and third visits of St. Paul to Jerusalem. The whole interval, according to Dr. Burton's construction of the passage in Galatians, would be thirteen, but on the view here preferred, ten complete years. Two years only are assigned by him to the second interval, and eleven to the stay at Tarsus and Antioch, a most unnatural disparity, which does violence to the tenor of the whole history. Let us examine the details in order.

The disposition of the whole period, proposed by Dr. Burton, is as follows. The first visit A. D. 33; nine years in retirement at Tarsus; the return to Antioch A. D. 42; the second visit, March A. D. 44; the first missionary journey, May A. D. 45; one day to Seleucia, two to Cyprus, a week in the island, two sabbaths at Antioch, or perhaps three weeks or a month, two days to Iconium, a stay there of one week, three weeks at Lystra and Derbe, and about three weeks on their return, so as to reach Antioch by the end of September. They stayed there 'no short time,' that is, they spent the winter there, and the next Easter attended the council at Jerusalem.

It is difficult to conceive how any reader of the history could arrive at a conclusion so unnatural, with regard to the relative length of the earlier and later portions of this main period. The words of xi. 26, ought alone to suffice for its refutation. How could the writer speak with emphasis of this interval, as a whole year, if he had just passed by no less than nine years of St. Paul's labours at Tarsus without one word of notice? There are certainly as few traces of a long interval in Acts x. xi., as in xiii. xiv.; for the whole history of Cornelius, and the conference that followed, must have occupied a few weeks only. Any impartial reader would be disposed to regard the two intervals, from the internal marks alone, as of nearly equal length, and would probably conjecture the first of them to be the shorter. Yet the chronology of Dr. Burton extends the former to eleven, and contracts the latter to less than two years.

Let us now compare the words of the narrative. "They who were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to Jews only." Some of them, however, Cyprian and Cyrenean Jews, "when they came to Antioch, spake unto the Greeks, preaching the Lord Jesus." Many believed and turned to the Lord. The report of their conversion reached the church at Jerusalem, who sent Barnabas on a mission of inquiry. On his arrival, he rejoiced at the grace of God, and presently departed to Tarsus, that he might bring Saul to be his helper in the work. "And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch."

On the scheme of Dr. Burton, eleven years must have elapsed between the latest date of the above dispersion on the death of Stephen, and the journey of Barnabas, to bring Saul to Antioch. Such an interval is tenfold more unnatural than the one against which he has argued, of three or four years being spent in the first missionary circuit. Nine years of unmentioned labour, or unseasonable rest, in a single province, following a two years' rest in Arabia, does violence to all common sense, as a true account of the early labours of this great Apostle. A stay at Tarsus, even of four years, and much more of nine, is too long to suit the character of St. Paul, or to agree with the evident connexion, in the history, between the persecution at the death of Stephen, and the arrival of Barnabas at Antioch. Accepting the shorter interval of ten years from the first to the third visit, a division into four and six years before and after the death of Herod, seems to agree best with the natural proportion of the sacred narrative. Seven years complete will then intervene between the conversion of Saul and the first visit with Barnabas; which leaves a space quite as long as seems compatible with the above statement, between the death of Stephen, and the first origin of the Gentile church at Antioch.

The arrangement thus obtained appears to be natural and consistent. The voyage of Saul to Tarsus would be probably about Pentecost, A. D. 40. That year was one of alarm to the Jews from the madness of Caligula, and of consequent rest to the churches, during which Peter carried on his pastoral visitation in Judea. The winter was spent in Joppa, and the next spring, probably, would be the date of his mission to Cornelius. The discussion at Jerusalem, which follows, would thus be in the first half of A. D. 41. The same summer the preaching to the Gentiles at Antioch might begin. The tidings might reach the church at Jerusalem early in the next spring, when Barnabas would be sent at once on his mission to them. It is unlikely that he would delay long in seeking the help of Saul, who might thus arrive at Antioch about the Pentecost of A.D. 42, after an absence in Cilicia of two years, spent partly in Tarsus, and partly in preaching throughout the whole province. Then a stay of a whole year is specified, in Antioch alone. Before its close, or in the spring of A.D. 43, the prophets came down from Jerusalem, and gave warning of the famine then at hand. The collection, we may infer from later examples, would not be the work of a day, but the result of weekly offerings, continued through nearly a whole year, and thus would be ready against the Passover of A.D. 44, when the visit took place, and the famine really began. In this arrangement all the details harmonize well together, and the only difficulty is the length of time from Stephen's death to the rise of the Gentile Church at Antioch. That five years might really elapse is however quite explicable, while a protraction of the interval to more than twice that length, as in Dr. Burton's chronology, involves a thorough dislocation of the whole connexion of events pointed out in the narrative.

The contraction of the missionary circuit to four months only, is equally incredible, and contradicts evident marks in the narrative of repeated and prolonged delay. To assign only one week to the stay in Cyprus is the first departure from the text.

For we are told that, "when they were in Salamis, they preached (*κατηγγέλλον*) the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews," which clearly implies a stay of several weeks in that one city alone. We are next informed that they went through the island as far as Paphos; which cannot denote a simple journey from one town to the other, but a full proclamation of the gospel in the intermediate places, until at length they arrived at the latter city, when perhaps the lateness of the season might lead them to cross over to the continent, before the winter set in. Hence it is tolerably clear that the first summer, and perhaps part of the autumn, was spent in the island. It is not likely that they would omit to preach the gospel in Perga, on their arrival, or that John would leave them there, and return to Jerusalem, unless they had made some stay in the place, before proceeding further. They "went through" (*διελθόντες*) the country from Perga, an expression which St. Luke has used five times in the later chapters for a missionary circuit, and never for a mere journey without stopping, for which another term is employed (*Acts xvii. 1. διοδευσάντες*). Hence we may safely infer that its meaning here is the same, and that some weeks, perhaps months, were passed on their way to Antioch from Perga. Two Sabbaths at Antioch are specified, before their expulsion, and a longer interval is clearly implied, since the word of God was published throughout all the region. Two months, instead of three weeks, is only a reasonable allowance for their stay. At Iconium, their next missionary station, we are told that they abode a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, which it is ridiculous to expound of one week only. Clearly it denotes a period considerably longer than the stay at Antioch, and hence may be reckoned at four or five months. If their journey began at Pentecost, and they sailed from Cyprus at the close of September, they might reach Antioch a month later, remove to Iconium about the end of the year, and continue there till the following Passover or Pentecost. They next fled to Lystra and Derbe, and the region round about, and there "they continued preaching the gospel (*ἦσαν εὐαγγελίζομενοι*). Their

labours here might very possibly employ them till the close of the summer. On their return they stayed at each place, to confirm the disciples, and appointed elders in every church, a work that called for deliberation, passed throughout Pisidia, and preached in Perga and Attalia, before they embarked for Antioch. Hence their return could not well be earlier than the spring, and might probably be delayed until the autumn, of the third year.

Now since the return from Jerusalem A.D. 44, was about the time of Pentecost, it is not probable that the Apostles would be sent out on a fresh journey immediately on their arrival at Antioch; and there is nothing in the passage to oppose the construction that their circuit began in the following year. In this case, it might close in the spring or autumn of A.D. 47. After this they abode at Antioch 'no little time' before the council. To refer the expression to one single winter, considering that the history occupies at least fifteen, and probably more than twenty years, up to the time of the council, of which one year only is expressly mentioned, is certainly a strained and unnatural estimate. The whole interval, from the first to the third visit, is at least ten years, occupied by the conversion of Cornelius, the spread of the gospel to Antioch, the stay there of one year, the time of the collection, and the visit, the delay before the circuit, and the circuit itself, and lastly this delay at its close, which alone is stated to be 'no little time.' The term must naturally denote more than a whole year. And hence the interval from the autumn of A.D. 47 to the spring of A.D. 50, agrees well with the tenor of the history. There is nothing whatever in the text to justify the assertion that the visit, Acts xv. "certainly took place in the year after their first tour," for the words tend to the very opposite conclusion. A stay of one winter only, after such a circuit, would have been no warrant for the emphatic statement of the historian, which, when compared with their previous absence, and their first residence at Antioch, can hardly denote less than two years' delay.

VII. The previous reasoning leads us to date the council six complete, or seven current years, after the second visit to Jerusalem, which is fixed to the Passover, A.D. 44, by the testimony of Josephus on the reign of Herod. This conclusion depends on a combination of several data, the most probable view of the period in Galatians, the presumptive date of Stephen's death and Saul's conversion, the occasion of the churches' rest from persecution under Caligula, and the most reasonable distribution of the time between the stay at Tarsus, the length of the first circuit, and the long abode at Antioch after its close. If we abandon the evidence arising from the death of Stephen and the rest of the Churches, we might prolong the joint stay at Tarsus and Antioch before the second visit, and diminish the joint length of the circuit and the later residence, possibly two years. Beyond this limit, the disproportion becomes too great to have the least plausibility, and the circuit and long stay at Antioch would be contracted into a space too narrow to satisfy the scope of the history. On the other hand, it is possible to defer the council one or two years later, if we suppose the fourteen years to be complete, not current, and the stay at Tarsus and Antioch three years only before the second visit. And thus any year from A.D. 48 to A.D. 51, might possibly be reconciled with the evidence hitherto adduced, though A.D. 49 or A.D. 50, are the dates which will suit best with the whole narrative.

To remove, if possible, this uncertainty, we have next to examine the succession of the Roman procurators, and especially the appointment and recall of Felix. The history connects the latter event with the council by marks of time, which hardly admit of greater uncertainty than a single year. Thus Dr. Burton places them in A.D. 46 and 55, Mr. Greswell in A.D. 48 and 58, and Usher and Hug in A.D. 52 and 60. It is clear that St. Paul sailed to Rome the same year that Felix was recalled, and reached it in the following spring, and that his release was not until two full years later. And hence the succession of the procurators, if their time can be exactly determined, will nearly fix

the chronology, and confirm or modify the date of the council, as provisionally derived from the passage in Galatians, and the outline of the previous history. Subsidiary marks of time are found in the decree of Claudius for the expulsion of the Jews from Rome, the appointment of Gallio, the appearance of the Egyptian, the high-priesthood of Jonathan and Ananias, and the pretorian prefects of Rome. The date of the appointment of Felix has first to be ascertained.

VIII. After the death of Herod Agrippa, there were three governors before Felix, Cuspius Fadus, Tiberius Alexander, and Cumanus. The first must have arrived in the summer after Herod's death, or A.D. 44. After mention of the famine, which took place during his administration and that of Alexander, Josephus continues: "But now Herod, king of Chalcis, removed Joseph, son of Camydus, from the highpriesthood, and made Ananias, son of Nebedus, his successor. And now Cumanus came as successor to Alexander, as also Herod, brother of Agrippa, departed this life, in the eighth year of Claudius Cæsar, who bestowed his dominions on the younger Agrippa." Then, after mention of the tumults under Cumanus: "So Claudius sent Felix, the brother of Pallas, to take charge of Judea, and having already completed the twelfth year of his reign, he bestowed on Agrippa the tetrarchy of Philip, and Batanea, and added Trachonitis with Abila, the district of Lysanias; but took from him Chalcis, when he had governed four years."

The accession of Claudius was January A.D. 41. And hence we may infer from the above statement, as most probable, that Felix was appointed A.D. 52, which was the twelfth of Claudius, and Chalcis taken from Agrippa in the spring of A.D. 53, when the twelfth year had closed. Since he held it four years, he would receive it not before the spring of A.D. 49. Herod, however, died in the eighth of Claudius, or A.D. 48. This is quite consistent, if the death of Herod were towards the close of that year, since his nephew could not then be appointed until the following spring. Cumanus, it appears from Josephus, was

governor of Judea a little before Herod's death, and his arrival may therefore be placed about midsummer A.D. 48. Now the arrival of Fadus was just four years earlier, and hence that of Alexander may be dated midsummer A.D. 46, so that he and Fadus would respectively hold their office for two full years.

On this view the government of Cumanus would occupy four years, from midsummer A.D. 48 to A.D. 52. This inference is certain with regard to his appointment, but not as to the time of his removal, which might possibly have been earlier. Yet the mention of the appointment of Felix, and of the younger Agrippa, in the same sentence, with only the completion of the twelfth of Claudius interposed, renders this construction much the most natural. At the least, since two Passovers are mentioned by Josephus during the time of Cumanus, the earliest date of the former is A.D. 49, of the later A.D. 50, and of his removal, the summer of this latter year, while a date two years later seems, from the words of Josephus, to be more probable.

Tacitus, again, mentions the appointment of Felix under the consuls Sulla and Otho, at A.D. 52, but in terms not very easy to reconcile with Josephus.

“His brother, Felix, however, did not act with equal moderation, having been some time before (*jampridem*) appointed over Judea, and thinking all his crimes secure of impunity, since he had such influence to sustain him. The Jews indeed had risen in a kind of tumult and sedition, even after they had refused to obey, on hearing of the death of Caius; they continued to fear lest some other emperor should give the same commands. Meanwhile Felix inflamed their tumults by unsuitable remedies; Ventidius Cumanus being his rival in the worst deeds, to whom part of the province was given; so that the Galileans were under him, the Samaritans under Felix, nations long at variance, and whose passions were then less restrained through their contempt for their rulers. Hence they began to plunder each other, to form bands of robbers, to lay ambushes, and at length to hold battles, and bring the spoil to the procurators. These at first

rejoiced, but as the evil increased, when they interposed with troops, the soldiers were slain, and the province would have burst into open war, if Quadratus had not stepped in. He did not hesitate long in punishing with death those Jews who had slain the soldiers. Cumanus and Felix caused some delay, since Claudius, on hearing the causes of the rebellion, gave him authority to punish the procurators also. But Quadratus displayed Felix among the judges, receiving him upon the tribunal, that the zeal of his accusers might be cooled. Cumanus was thus condemned for the crimes of which both were guilty, and quiet was restored to the province."

Josephus gives no hint of this divided government, shared by Felix with Cumanus, still less, that the former was ever appointed separately over Samaria, and he represents the cause to have been decided by Claudius himself at Rome. Yet since he states that Felix was appointed through the solicitation of the high-priest Jonathan, this may perhaps imply that he had previously held some office in Palestine, and was known in Judea. The statement of St. Paul, that he had been many years a judge to the Jewish nation, leans to the same view. On the other hand, since Cumanus favoured the Samaritans, and the cause was decided against them, it is hard to believe that Tacitus was correctly informed as to their respective provinces, and the true nature of the dispute. Josephus, a native of the country, who was about fourteen years old at the time of the occurrence, is clearly a better authority than Tacitus; while even from the latter we may infer that the removal of Cumanus, and the sole procuratorship of Felix, took place in the year of Sulla and Otho, or in A.D. 52, where Josephus places that appointment.

Four Passovers, on this view, would occur during the government of Cumanus. The tumult, though it might possibly be at the first, seems most naturally referred to the second, or A.D. 50. In either case, it is about the date assigned to the council by the previous evidence. And hence the slaughter of the Jews, and the troubles of Judea at that Passover, may account for the

influx of Christian Jews to Antioch from Jerusalem, which led soon after to the Apostle's visit. If this connexion be admitted, the council could not well be earlier than midsummer A.D. 49, nor later than the autumn of A.D. 50.

IX. From the appointment of Felix, let us proceed to examine the date of his removal, which Professor Hug fixes as late as A.D. 61, but Dr. Burton, following Scaliger, as early as A. D. 55. Since both appeal to the authority of Josephus, it is needful to examine accurately the whole testimony of that historian.

The reasons alleged for each date are briefly these. Josephus tells us that Felix, after his recall, owed his escape to the intercession of Pallas, who was in particular favour with Nero at the time. But Tacitus informs us that Pallas lost the favour of Nero in his first, and was put to death in his eighth year. Hence Dr. Burton has inferred that A.D. 55 is the latest possible date, which the histories of Josephus and Tacitus will allow; and, reckoning backward from this year as a fixed point, he obtains A.D. 46 for the date of the council. On the other hand, Professor Hug infers, from the Life of Josephus, that the recall was in the seventh of Nero, or A.D. 61, since eight years and four months of Nero's reign were complete, before the voyage of Josephus, to obtain the liberation of the priests whom Felix had sent prisoners to Rome; and this commission could not be delayed, as on the other hypothesis, seven or eight years after the procurator had been recalled. To decide between these opinions, we must take a fuller view of the whole evidence.

After the appointment of Felix, Josephus records in succession the following events, which are a summary of this part of the Antiquities; the appointment of the younger Agrippa over Iturea, Trachonitis, and Abila, and his removal from Chalcis, after a four years' rule, and the completion of the twelfth of Claudius; the marriage of Drusilla, Herod Agrippa's daughter, who was six years old at his death, with Azizus, king of Emesa, and her later marriage with Felix, while he was procurator; the

death of Claudius and accession of Nero; the death of Azizus, and succession of Soemus, in Nero's first year, with the gift to Agrippa of Tiberias and some parts of Galilee; the growing troubles of Judea, where Felix caught and destroyed many robbers, and Eleazar, one of the most notorious; the assassination, suborned by Felix himself, of Jonathan the high-priest; the crimes and insolence of the Sicarii; the appearance of the Egyptian false prophet, and the dispersion of his followers; the seditions of Cæsarea; the appointment of Ishmael to be high-priest, and the disorders of the whole priesthood; the coming of Porcius Festus as the successor of Felix, the accusations of the Jews against him, and his escape through the intercession of his brother Pallas; the decree pronounced by Burrhus against the Jews of Cæsarea; the increase of the Sicarii, and the activity of Festus against them; the petition about the palace of Herod, granted through Poppæa, Nero's wife, and the transfer of the priesthood to Joseph Cabi; the appointment of Albinus, when Nero heard of the death of Festus; the transfer of the priesthood to Ananus, son of Ananus, and the condemnation of James the Just; the deposition of Ananus, after only three months, on the arrival of Albinus, and the appointment of Jesus, son of Damneus; the boldness and crimes of the Sicarii, the enlargement by Agrippa of Cæsarea Philippi, which he calls Neronias; the priesthood of Jesus, son of Gamaliel; the voyage of Florus from Rome, the finishing of the temple, and the transfer of the priesthood to Matthias, son of Theophilus.

In the Life of Josephus we are further told that he was born in the first of Caius, that in his 26th year he took a voyage to Rome, in order to procure the liberation of certain priests, his own acquaintance, whom Felix, when governor, had sent prisoners on a trivial charge, and that he succeeded through the intercession of Poppæa, the wife of Nero. Also at the close of the Antiquities we are told that his 56th year was then current, in the 13th of Domitian.

The accession of Caligula was March 16, A.D. 37, and that

of Domitian September 13th, A.D. 81. Since Josephus was less than 56 years old at the beginning of Domitian's 13th year, or September 13, A.D. 93, he must have been born later than September 13, A.D. 37, and before March 13, A.D. 38, the close of the first year of Caligula. His birth must therefore be placed about December A.D. 37, and the time of his voyage, in his 26th year, was the spring or summer of A.D. 63, the ninth of Nero, and not the previous year.

Hence one evident presumption results against the earlier date for the recall of Felix. In that case the priests must have been detained more than eight years at Rome, before Josephus undertook the voyage for their liberation, an interval very unlikely to have occurred.

We have a more decisive proof in the age of Drusilla. Josephus states that she was six years old at the death of her father, Herod Agrippa, that is, in A.D. 44. After the twelfth of Claudius her brother Agrippa gave her in marriage to Azizus. Not long after, Felix prevailed on her to forsake her husband, and to become his own wife. Now, by the express words of Josephus, the appointment of Agrippa over the tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanius was later than January A.D. 53. The first marriage of Drusilla was later than this appointment, and some interval, probably half a year at least, must be allowed, before she forsook Azizus, and became the wife of Felix. Indeed she would be only 15 years old in the year A.D. 53. And hence the scheme of Dr. Burton, which places the visit of Paul to Jerusalem in that year, is disproved fully by this one test alone. At the Pentecost of that year, most probably her marriage was not complete, and it is not likely that St. Luke would call her simply the wife of Felix, when she was only living in adultery, and had just before forsaken her lawful husband. We may infer that the visit was not before the death of Azizus, which itself took place in Nero's first year, and hence that the Pentecost of A.D. 55 is its earliest possible date, and A.D. 57, the earliest year for the recall of Felix.

Again, if we adhere to the order of Josephus, the death of Jonathan the high-priest was not earlier than the first of Nero. The appearance of the Egyptian was still later, and A.D. 56 seems the earliest date that we assign to that disturbance. The words of the chief captain, Acts xxi. 38, imply that some time had then elapsed since his appearance. And hence, on this ground, A.D. 56 is the earliest date for the visit, and A.D. 58, in like manner, the earliest year for the governor's recall.

Again, if we place that recall in A.D. 60, we have still a reasonable space for his successor, Festus. For Albinus seems to have held office during four years previous to the war, or A.D. 62—66. Now Festus was not recalled, but his successor was appointed because of his unexpected death. And since both Fadus and Alexander were recalled after two years, it is more natural to assign the same interval, than a longer space, for Festus also.

Further, in A. D 58, Felix would have been procurator six years, and if the statement of Tacitus has a partial truth, he had held some office in Palestine since the first year of Cumanus, A. D. 48, or for the total space of ten years. This agrees with the words of St. Paul, that he had been for many years a judge to that nation. But in A. D. 53, the date of the visit in Dr. Burton's and Scaliger's chronology, he would have been procurator only one or two years, and only the fifth year would be current from the arrival of Cumanus, his predecessor in office. This note of time is equally conclusive in favour of a considerably later date.

In these remarks it has been assumed that two years elapsed between the visit of St. Paul, and the recall of Felix, which results from the usual and natural construction of Acts xxiv. 27. Some, however, have supposed that these two years relate, not to the time of St. Paul's imprisonment, but only to the government of Felix, reckoned either from its origin, or from some renewal, until his recall. But it is very unlikely that St. Luke should adopt so vague an expression, and date from an event nowhere specified in his history. If referred to the first appointment of Felix,

the words would openly contradict those of St. Paul, in the beginning of the same chapter, where he states his government to have lasted many years, and not for two only. On the other hand, to date from some unknown renewal of his office would be in every way most unnatural. And besides, a simple comparison of verses 10, 27, will prove clearly that the historian was not referring, in any sense, to the length of Felix's government, but simply to the long delay, before the cause of the Apostle came to a real decision. And though we have no letters of St. Paul that can be referred to this period, this is no proof that the two years at Cæsarea were barren in labours. No town was so well suited for intercourse with converted Jews from all the countries of the dispersion, and consequently with all the Christian Churches, while Jews formed their nucleus in almost every city; for Cæsarea, it is well known, was the main seaport of Palestine, and the principal seat of the Roman power in that province.

Two reasons, alleged for the earlier date of the recall of Felix, have still to be examined. He was accused by the Jews at Rome, immediately on his return, and spared only by the entreaties of Pallas, who, according to Josephus, was then in favour with Nero. Now Tacitus affirms that the favourite was removed by Nero in his first year, or A. D. 55, whence Dr. Burton infers that this year is the latest date for the recall of Felix, consistent with the testimony of Tacitus and Josephus.

This argument, though such reliance has been placed upon it, as to make it the main pillar of the whole chronology, has no weight whatever, and depends for its seeming force on a careless perusal of these two testimonies, and an inaccurate calculation of the times. The removal, of which Tacitus speaks, was not only in the first year of Nero, but earlier than the birthday of Britannicus, which, we know from clear evidence, was in February. And hence, if the recall of Felix were in the summer of that year, where Dr. Burton and Scaliger have placed it, instead of being in the time when Pallas was highest in power,

it would be in the first crisis of his dishonour and public disgrace. A date a few years later would thus be more probable even on this ground. After the death of Agrippina, Nero might perhaps be less jealous of the favourite, who had then lived some years in retirement, and to whom he really owed his own elevation to the throne. It is true that Pallas died in the eighth of Nero, and the Emperor was suspected of poisoning him. But the only reason assigned is Nero's avarice, because, by living to such an age, his former favourite detained from him an immense property. This is quite consistent with the supposition that he had influence enough with Nero, two years before, to obtain the pardon of Felix, against a people so despised as the Jews. The favour of the tyrant was eminently capricious; and, with regard to Pallas, would be likely to experience several fluctuations. In fact, the confirmation of Felix in his government by Nero, which Josephus expressly mentions, could not be earlier than January or February A. D. 55, the very time at which Tacitus places the removal of Pallas. Hence it is perfectly clear that the time of his influence, to which Josephus alludes, could not possibly be the same which Dr. Burton has assumed it to be, and must refer to some later period of partially recovered favour, which might be only two years before his death.

Another argument for the earlier date has been stated as follows. The deputies who accused Felix after his recall, bribed Burrhus also to procure the decree against the Jews of Cæsarea. Now Burrhus died in A. D. 62, and declined in favour after A. D. 55, and hence it is inferred that the recall of Felix could not be at the later, but might be at the earlier date. But this rests upon a manifest error, for the deputation was not the same. It was the Greeks of Cæsarea, who had been sent to Rome by Felix before his recall, who are said to have bribed Burrhus, and thus procured the decree against the Jews; while the other deputation was actually composed of Jews, and only set out to Rome after Felix had returned. And besides, Burrhus remained in full possession of influence until near the time of his death,

and hence the date A. D. 60 is fully consistent with the facts relative to the embassy from Cæsarea.

The reasons, then, for placing the recall of Felix in A. D. 60, instead of five years earlier, are as follows. First, we avoid the hypothesis, in itself highly improbable, that St. Paul stayed at Tarsus eight or nine years, in comparative inaction, before he began his mission to the Gentiles. Next, the council is thus referred to A. D. 50, and the troubles in Judea at the previous Passover will account for an unusual resort of Jewish Christians from Jerusalem to Antioch. Thirdly, the visit of St. Paul is thus placed three years after the death of Drusilla's first husband, instead of being, as with the other date, a few months before the probable time of her first marriage, and two years before her union with Felix ceased to be adulterous, while her age will thus be twenty, instead of only fifteen years. Fourthly, Felix would then have been procurator eight years, and if Tacitus be correct, have held some office in Palestine four years longer, which agrees with the statement of the Apostle, that he had been many years a judge to that nation. On the other view, little more than one year would have passed from the recall of Cumanus, his predecessor, and less than five years from that predecessor's first appointment. This objection, like the third, is quite fatal to the earlier dates, even when standing alone. Fifthly, two years instead of seven, are thus allowed for the government of Festus, which agrees with the fact that he was not recalled, but died unexpectedly. Sixthly, there is thus an interval of three years, instead of eight, between the voyage of the priests, sent by Felix to Rome, and that of Josephus, to procure their liberation, an interval far more consistent with probability. Seventhly, it agrees with the statement of Josephus, that Nero, in his first year, confirmed Felix in his government. To suppose him recalled in that very year, is therefore a flat contradiction to the testimony of the historian. Lastly, it maintains the natural order of time in these chapters of Josephus, since all the actions of Felix, except his marriage with Drusilla,

are evidently placed by him under the reign of Nero. If he was governor under Claudius for two years only, and for six under Nero, this order is quite natural, but is irreconcilable with the earlier chronology.

X. The intermediate dates may now be adjusted, if not with exactness, at least with high probability, and a near approach to the truth. The council, in the fourteenth year from the Apostle's conversion, and soon after the troubles had begun under Cumanus in Judea, will be referred to the summer of A. D. 50. The remainder of that year, which would be far advanced on their return to Antioch, might be spent in that city; and the plan of revisiting the churches may be referred naturally to the early spring of A. D. 51, when seven years were nearly complete from the death of Herod, and fourteen from Saul's conversion. One year must have been spent in the circuit of four provinces, Syria, Cilicia, Phrygia, and Galatia. It would be quite inconsistent with the purpose of the Apostle, to pursue a very rapid and hasty journey. He went first "throughout Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches," and then throughout Phrygia and the country of Galatia, in the last of which provinces many churches were evidently formed for the first time. He might thus arrive at Troas on the sea-coast early in the spring of A. D. 52. Six months may be allowed for the stay in Macedonia, three months at Philippi, where the stay seems to have been the longest, and about six weeks respectively at Thessalonica and Berea. The Apostle would then arrive at Corinth about October A. D. 52, and his stay of eighteen months would terminate about the Passover A. D. 54, when the season would be favourable for his voyage. The feast, Acts xviii. 21, would be the Pentecost of the same year, so that the interval would allow only a short delay at Ephesus, and that feast was chosen elsewhere for a similar visit, being a natural epoch to the church after the first Pentecost. The rest of the year would be occupied with the short stay at Jerusalem, the voyage to Antioch, a stay of some time in that city, and a second visit to all the

churches of Galilee and Phrygia, and the eastern parts of Asia Minor, so that St. Paul would probably reach Ephesus just at its close. Three months, before the separation of the disciples, and two years afterwards, will bring us to the Passover of A. D. 57. At that time, or soon after, the tumult arose, and the Apostle left a little before Pentecost, which was the intended limit of his stay, 1 Cor. xvi. 8. He stayed in Macedonia until late in the autumn, passed the three winter months in Greece, returned to Macedonia about the beginning of March, and set out from Philippi for Jerusalem immediately after the Passover of A.D. 58, arriving punctually at the time of Pentecost. There he remained a prisoner for two full years, or till the Pentecost of A.D. 60, which has been fixed already to be the time when Felix was recalled. Towards August he sailed for Rome, but did not arrive till the winter was past, about February or March A.D. 61; while his release would be two years later, or in A. D. 63, somewhere in the spring. All the dates recorded by the Evangelist fall in with this arrangement. The whole history thus disposes itself, without violence, into four portions, each of seven years; from the Pentecost A. D. 30, to the conversion of Saul, about the Pentecost A. D. 37; from his conversion to the return of Paul and Barnabas from Jerusalem, after the death of Herod, Pentecost A.D. 44; thence to the opening of the second missionary circuit, early in A. D. 51; and thence to the arrival at Jerusalem for the last time, at the Pentecost of A. D. 58.

During this interval, however, there are other notes of time which require to be considered, as they may tend either to weaken or confirm the previous chronology. These are the decree of Claudius, the arrival of Gallio at Corinth, the mention of Narcissus in the Epistle to the Romans, the Egyptian false prophet, the high priesthood of Ananias, and the Pretorian Prefects of Rome.

1. When St. Paul reached Corinth, Aquila and Priscilla had lately arrived from Rome, in consequence of a decree of Claudius, banishing all the Jews from that city. If there were clear data

to fix the time of that decree, it would serve to test the chronology. But we are left to mere conjecture. Mr. Greswell refers it to January A.D. 50, and ascribes it to the report at Rome of disturbances in Judea, which rendered it unsafe to leave so many Jews in the capital. Suetonius, however, seems to account for it by local tumults among the Jews at Rome. "Judæos, impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes, Româ expulit." This is most naturally explained of internal dissensions, which followed the introduction of the gospel at Rome. The name, Chrestus, here assigned to the author of the disturbances, seems to imply that they arose among Jews of the dispersion, in conflicts occasioned by Christianity, and not among the Jews of Palestine. The troubles in Judea seem also to have reached their height a little before the recall of Cumanus, early in A.D. 52, and if the decree were referred to that period, it will be six months before the arrival of St. Paul at Corinth, as determined above. Indeed it is not improbable that this decree first became publicly known during the stay at Philippi, and gave encouragement to that tumultuous outcry—"These men being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city," which led to the Apostle's imprisonment. If the troubles in Judea were at their height in the winter before Cumanus was recalled, or at the close of A.D. 51, the decree published in the early spring, and known at Philippi in May, and St. Paul reached Corinth in the following autumn, all the facts will be found in entire harmony with each other.

2. Again, the persecution of the Jews against St. Paul at Corinth reached its height, "when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia." The words of St. Luke evidently imply that Gallio was not in office when St. Paul arrived there, and had only been appointed a few months before the close of that long residence. Now Gallio was the brother of Seneca, who was recalled from exile in A.D. 49, and made the tutor of Nero. Hence his appointment cannot reasonably be placed earlier than A.D. 50. If, however, the council had been held, as Dr. Burton supposes, in A.D. 46, the Apostle would leave Corinth, at the latest, in the spring of A.D.

49. Dr. Burton dates his departure in the previous year, when Seneca was certainly an exile ; and, consequently, when it is most unlikely that Gallio would have been appointed over Achaia. On the other hand, it was A.D. 53 when Nero married Octavia, and his prospect of succession to the throne was secured by the acts of Agrippina. The time would thus be very natural for the appointment of Gallio, the brother of Nero's tutor, to a lucrative and honourable post. Nero completed his sixteenth year on December 15, A.D. 53, and then married Octavia. The appointment of Gallio may be not improbably referred to that celebration, so that he would enter on his office in January or February A.D. 54, about three months before the Apostle set out from Corinth. It is plain that the harmony with St. Luke's statement, on this view of the dates, will be complete.

3. The salutation (Rom. xvi. 11) to the household of Narcissus had been made a reason for a different chronology. The letter, on the above arrangement, was written about February A.D. 58, but on the other scheme, five years earlier. Now many have supposed this Narcissus to be the celebrated freedman of Claudius. In this case, since he was slain at the very opening of Nero's reign, it is argued that the Epistle must have been written earlier. It is, however, a mere conjecture that the freedman of Claudius is the person to whom St. Paul alludes. And even were this conjecture a certain fact, it is surely possible that converts in his family, during his lifetime, might be designated from their former master, even three years after his death. Dr. Burton, indeed, affirms that such a salutation would be impossible, unless during the lifetime of Narcissus, but without reason. If several of the household of that freedman and favourite had become converts while he was alive, no other mode of designation would be equally brief and appropriate, in this brief series of Apostolic salutations. But since it is impossible to determine whether the freedman of Claudius, or some other Narcissus is spoken of, the argument can have no weight in a question of exact chronology.

4. When St. Paul visited Jerusalem, the Sicarii were in full activity, and the Egyptian, not long before, had led four thousand of them into the wilderness. Now Josephus mentions, in order, the accession of Nero, the confirmation of Felix in his office, his exertions in capturing Eleazer, and clearing the country of the robbers, the rise of another class of robbers, called Sicarii, the murder of Jonathan, the rise of false prophets: and lastly, the appearance of the Egyptian, who did more mischief than even these, with his overthrow by Felix and the Roman soldiers. Since the confirmation of Felix could not well be earlier than the spring of A.D. 55, the rise of the Sicarii, after the extirpation of other robbers, could hardly be earlier than the following year; and some interval must still be allowed, before the appearance of the Egyptian. Hence this tumult may be probably assigned to the close of A.D. 57, or the opening of A.D. 58. This agrees perfectly with the question of Lysias. "Art thou not then that Egyptian, who before these days made an uproar, and led out into the wilderness four thousand men of the Sicarii?" If we adhere to the order of Josephus, the spring A.D. 56 is clearly too early for this event, though either A.D. 57 or 58 would agree well with the history.

5. At the same visit, Ananias seems to have exercised the function of high-priest, and still St. Paul was not aware of his claim to the office. Some have proposed to translate his words—"I knew not, brethren, that there is a high-priest." But this has no warrant in the Greek idiom, and is clearly disproved by the rest of the verse. St. Paul explains why he had used so sharp a rebuke against Ananias. Now his ignorance that Ananias was high-priest would be a direct and simple explanation; while his ignorance of there being any high-priest in office could only serve as an excuse, by resolving itself into the more precise affirmation, which our translators have so justly preferred.

Now it is clear from Josephus, that Ananias was sent to Rome, along with Cumanus, and that, after the appointment of Felix, Jonathan held the office till his death. Afterwards the priest-

hood was vacant, until Agrippa gave it to Ishmael, the son of Cabi, very shortly before the recall of Felix. The death of Jonathan can hardly be placed earlier than the latter half of A.D. 56, since his long expostulations with Felix on his misgovernment occasioned his murder. The visit, then, if at Pentecost A.D. 58, would be at a time when the office was vacant, and Ananias would not be the real high-priest.

6. Finally, when Paul arrived at Rome, the centurion delivered the other prisoners to the Prefect. The singular number, used by St. Luke, implies naturally that the office was then held by one, and not by two persons. Now Burrhus died in A.D. 62, with a suspicion of poison, and Fenius Rufus and Sofanius Tigellinus were appointed his joint successors. From the account of Tacitus the change would seem to have been early in the year, since the death of Octavia, which is mentioned nine sections later, took place on the ninth of June. Hence it seems certain that A.D. 63, the date of Usher, is too late for the arrival at Rome, and even A.D. 62, the date of Professor Hug, would probably fail to satisfy this condition, while the date proposed above, A.D. 61, passes unharmed through this final test.

XI. The conclusions thus obtained, when they have been combined with the evidence, which fixes the Epistles to their respective places in the history, will result in the following table, where the months in brackets are only conjectural and approximate.

A.D.		A.D.	
30. April.	Crucifixion.	41. (Pentecost.)	Conversion of Cornelius.
May.	Pentecost.		
36. (June.)	Death of Stephen.	42. (February.)	Barnabas at Antioch.
37. (April.)	Conversion of Saul.	42. (Pentecost.)	Saul at Antioch.
Pentecost.	First Preaching of Saul.	43. Passover.	Prophecy of Famine.
40. (Pentecost.)	First Visit to Jerusalem.	44. Passover.	Second Visit to Jerusalem.
(September.)	Peter at Joppa.	May.	Death of Herod.
		Pentecost.	Return to Antioch.

A.D.

45. Pentecost. First circuit begins.
(September.) Paul and Barnabas
at Perga.
46. Circuit in Asia.
47. (September.) Return to Antioch.
50. Spring. Pharisees at Antioch.
- Summer. Council at Jerusalem
- Autumn. Peter and Mark at Antioch.
51. Spring. Second Circuit begins.
- (September.) St. Paul in Galatia.
52. (February.) St. Paul at Troas.
- (May.) St. Paul leaves Philippi.
- (August.) St. Paul at Athens.
- October. St. Paul at Corinth.
- (November.) *First Epistle to Thessalonica.*
53. Spring. *Second Epistle.*
- Autumn. *Epistle to the Galatians.*
54. January. Gallio in Achaia.
- April. St. Paul sails to Ephesus.
- May. Fourth Visit to Jerusalem.
- Autumn. Second Circuit of Galatia.
55. January. St. Paul arrives at Ephesus.
- April. Separation of Disciples.
57. April. *First Epistle to Corinth.*
- May. Departure from Ephesus.

A.D.

- (July.) *Second Epistle to Corinth.*
- November. Arrival at Corinth.
58. February. *Epistle to the Romans.*
- Passover. St. Paul at Philippi.
- Pentecost. Fifth Visit to Jerusalem.
60. Pentecost Recall of Felix.
- August. Voyage to Rome.
- November. Shipwreck at Malta.
61. February. Arrival at Rome.
62. (July.) *Epistle to the Ephesians.*
- Epistle to the Colossians.*
- Epistle to Philemon.*
63. (February.) *Epistle to the Philippians.*
- (June.) *Epistle to the Hebrews.*
- (August) St. Paul in Crete.
- Winter. St. Paul at Colosse.
64. Spring. St. Paul in Macedonia.
- Autumn. St. Paul at Corinth.
- First Epistle to Timothy.*
- Epistle to Titus.*
- Winter. St. Paul at Nicopolis.
65. Spring. Dalmatia and Troas.
- Summer. St. Paul prisoner at Rome.
- Second Epistle to Timothy.*
66. Spring? St. Paul's Martyrdom at Rome.

The dates after the close of the history are derived, by probable inference, from the indications in St. Paul's latest Epistles, and are given as the most probable. It is possible, however, that

the circuit to Colosse from Rome might occupy another year, so as to bring the four last dates a little lower, and the martyrdom might also occur before the winter, on Timothy's arrival, though the passage 2 Tim. iv. 13. leads naturally to an opposite view. Since, however, the persecution of the Christians began soon after the fire at Rome, which took place July A.D. 64, it is probable that the apprehension of St. Paul in Asia was not delayed beyond the following summer, and his martyrdom might possibly occur at the close of the same year.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE AUTHORSHIP AND DATE OF THE BOOK OF ACTS.

THE previous inquiry, besides its direct purpose in fixing the chronology of St. Luke's narrative, lends a powerful confirmation to its authority, from its entire agreement, in a large variety of details, and in a manner the most indirect, with the best contemporary historians. The way is now prepared for an examination of the time when the work was written, and its claim to be an authentic composition of St. Luke.

And first it is plain, from the book itself, that it professes to be written by a companion of St. Paul, who was present during his first voyage from Troas, and stay at Philippi, and who afterwards accompanied him from Philippi to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem to Rome. And since the whole narrative bears every mark of sincerity, and exact information, and is invincibly confirmed by its coincidences with St. Paul's letters, we are bound to accept its own evidence on this point, as conclusive. The only alternative is that of deliberate forgery, and is too absurd to need further refutation. Some German critics, indeed, have started a middle hypothesis, that the latter part is a journal of Timothy, which the unknown writer of the book, at a later period, inserted without change in his own narrative. But this wild fancy refutes itself on the least attention to the history. For the writer expressly distinguishes himself from Timothy at the beginning of that very journey, since he represents himself to have stayed with Paul at

Philippi, while Timothy and others had gone before, to wait for them at Troas (Acts xx. 4—6). And besides, there is no break in the whole narrative, which could give such an hypothesis the least plausibility. For the twentieth chapter is inseparably linked with the tumult at Ephesus, and with the previous account of Paul's ministry in Asia. In the next chapter the allusion to the seven deacons is equally retrospective, and the whole of this closing portion is evidently an integral and essential part of the history. Hence it follows that the writer was a companion of Paul for several years. From comparing the negative and positive evidence of the book itself with the salutations in the Epistles, we obtain precisely that result, by their internal testimony, which is the voice of all early tradition, that Luke the beloved physician, and no other companion of the Apostle, was the writer of the work.

The next inquiry relates to the date of its composition. The last event recorded is the close of Paul's imprisonment, which must be referred, as we have seen, to the year A.D. 63. Hence the last chapter, if not the whole work, could not have an earlier date. But there has been a serious division of judgment, whether the book were written and published about that time, or considerably later. Thus Professor Hug supposes the Gospel, and much more the book of Acts, to have been written after the decease of the Apostle. On the other hand, Tholuck and Olshausen, among recent critics, with most of the earlier commentators, refer its composition to the very time of the imprisonment at Rome.

The reasons for this earlier date are simple and manifest. The mere continuance of an imprisonment is by no means the most natural date for the close of the history, supposing that it was written after the Apostle's death, or even after he was advanced far on another journey. When the writer, therefore, ends abruptly at this point, without any mention of the circumstances of St. Paul's release, the only simple explanation must be, that he brought the history down to the date of its composition.

And this view is confirmed by the nature of all the later chapters, which are simply a personal narrative of the Apostle. The account of the voyage and shipwreck bears every sign, from the minuteness and reality of the description, of being written very shortly after the shipwreck itself had occurred. Hence no view can be so natural as that which dates the composition after the arrival at Rome, and during the course of the two years' stay of the Apostle.

Again, the last verses have precisely the appearance of a brief addition, intended simply to bring down the narrative to the time then present. They read as follows, when taken with the previous verse :—

“ And when he had said these things, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves. And he remained two full years in a hired house of his own, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.”

There is here just that unfinished air which a narrative assumes, when the writer brings it down to the actual time, without caring to select any marked epoch for its conclusion. And hence we may reasonably infer, that the two years of imprisonment were just completed, and that the Apostle, if not still a prisoner, had only just obtained his release, when the history was brought to its close.

The opinion, which delays the work to a later time, is burdened with an inherent improbability. For since the whole narrative, as it stands, ranges through thirty-three years, and the writer bears the character of an eye-witness in a great part of it, there can be no reason assigned why he should have preferred a long delay, instead of seizing the opportunity for composing it during his sojourn with the Apostle at Rome. The latest events would then be fresh in his memory, and the earliest already so remote, that further delay in recording them could answer no purpose. Whatever motive, therefore, prompted the

composition, would naturally lead to a date not long after those events, which constitute most graphic and personal portion of the narrative, and which the writer had witnessed with his own eyes.

From the Epistles it is clear that St. Luke was with the Apostle, at least during the main part of his imprisonment. No opportunity could seem better suited for such a work. It is quite in harmony with the general law of Providence, that when the Apostle and his companions were debarred from preaching and missionary circuits, the occasion should be seized for another mode of spreading the truth, and for confirming the faith of the disciples by a record of the triumphs the gospel had already gained.

If the book were not written at this time, we must place it either after the death of the Apostle, or during his second imprisonment, or in the interval during his latest circuit. If it were written after his death, that event would certainly have formed the natural close. If during the second imprisonment, it would be unnatural to specify the manner of the former arrival at Rome, and to say nothing of the later visit, which must have been fresh in the mind of the writer. Even if we place it during the last circuit, the writer could scarcely have avoided speaking of the Apostle's liberation, and of his renewed labours after his release.

An argument for a later date, after the beginning of the Jewish war, has been drawn from Acts viii. 26. Gaza, as we learn from Josephus (Bell. ii. 18. 1.) was assaulted and destroyed by the Jews at the beginning of their last troubles, or about A.D. 66, under the government of Florus. The historian is supposed to refer to this recent occurrence, when he says—"This is desert" (*αὕτη ἐστὶν ἔρημος.*)

But this construction of the words is unnatural. They refer evidently to the road, and not to the place. There is no reason why the later desolation of Gaza should be mentioned, and that of Ptolemais passed by in silence, a town also mentioned by the writer, which was destroyed by the Jews at the same time. An

intimation of the lonely character of the road would be suitable to the object of the narrative, since the direction would be more clearly supernatural, but an allusion to the later desolation of the town could answer no purpose, and has no parallel in the rest of the work. And while the phrase is quite appropriate for the character of the road, which would be permanent, it is just as inappropriate to describe a recent change in the state of the town, which would require either the use of the verb, or of an adverb of time, τὴν νῦν ἡρημωμένην, or ἥτις ἡρημώται. And hence the argument is of no force whatever.

When we examine carefully the narrative of the voyage, and the break which precedes it, and consider the long stay at Cæsarea, it will seem not improbable that all the work, except the two last chapters, was composed at Cæsarea, and only the conclusion added at Rome. No place would certainly be more convenient than Cæsarea for access to the best information on the facts recorded in the earlier part of the history, and the presence of St. Paul would there be an equal assistance, as during the residence at Rome. The completion of the work, however, cannot be placed earlier than the close of two years after the arrival in Italy, while its commencement, at the earliest, must have been some time after the first audience at Cæsarea.

The residence of Theophilus, if it can be clearly ascertained, will throw further light on the circumstances of the publication. His title proves that he was a person of rank, while the preface to the gospel implies that he was already a well-instructed convert to the faith. It is plain that he was not a resident in Palestine, and had not even visited Jerusalem, from Luke iv. 31; ix. 10; xix. 29; xxi. 37; xxiii. 51; xxiv. 13. Acts i. 12. He was not familiar with Athens and its neighbourhood, Acts xvii. 21, nor well acquainted with Macedonia, xvi. 12, while it is plain that he was not a constant resident either at Corinth or Ephesus, at least during the limits of St. Paul's labours. The chief alternatives are three; that he resided in Italy, in Greece, or in the neighbourhood of Antioch in Syria.

The first of these opinions has been held by several modern writers, and has in its favour the testimony of Eutychius, a writer, however, only of the tenth century, and therefore of very little weight. Its chief ground is the absence of geographical explanation in the last chapter, where Syracuse, Rhegium, Puteoli, Appii Forum, and Tres Tabernæ, are mentioned, as lying on the route of the Apostle from Melita to Rome. Theophilus, it is argued, if a resident in Italy, would be familiar with Rome and its neighbourhood, and thus the character of this part of the narrative would be explained. But the conclusion will by no means follow; since a provincial of rank, like Theophilus, would probably have had to pay one visit at least to Rome, and in that case the places which are here mentioned would equally have been well known to him. Nay, even without a personal visit, their position would be as likely to be known, as the position of Civita Vecchia, of Versailles, or of Dover, to any European of rank in our own day. Indeed the same argument would prove Theophilus to be a resident on the coast of Asia Minor, since Assos, Mitylene, Chios, Samos, Trogyllium and Miletus, Coos, Rhodes and Patara, are equally named without any fuller explanation. A wider collation of the internal evidence is needful, to arrive at any probable decision.

Several reasons may be urged against the above hypothesis, which makes Theophilus an inhabitant of Rome. Throughout the whole course of the gospel, there are no phrases, which imply a reference to Roman, but many to Grecian habits of thought. The political allusions are all Syrian, as in the mention of the presidency of Cyrenius, and the tetrarchy of Abila. The Greek inscription on the cross is first mentioned, before the Hebrew and Latin. The Greek and not the Roman coins, are introduced, and the Roman expression for tribute, *census*, which appears in the two other gospels, is replaced by the proper Greek term. There is the same entire absence of local explanation, in the mention of Phenice, Cyprus, Antioch, Seleucia, Salamis, Paphos, Cæsarea, Joppa and Tarsus, Iconium, Troas,

Coos, Rhodes, Patara, Ptolemais, which there is in the account of the last approach to Rome. And hence there seems a clear preponderance of internal presumptions, that Theophilus was a resident of Syria, or Asia Minor, rather than of Italy. The name itself is that of a contemporary Jewish high-priest, and is much more likely to have been found among the Gentile proselytes of Syria, than among the natives or inhabitants of Rome.

It is objected by Professor Hug, that a native of Antioch could hardly be so ignorant as Theophilus would appear to have been, of the geography of Palestine. But this remark has little foundation. For St. Luke mentions without comment or explanation the three districts of Iturea, Trachonitis, and Abilene, as well as Judea, Galilee, Samaria, Jericho, Bethany, the city of Samaria, Gaza, Azotus, Joppa and Cæsarea. An explication appears only in the inland towns and villages, as Capernaum, Bethsaida, Gadara, Nain, Arimathea, Nazareth and Emmaus, which might very well be unknown to the residents of Northern Syria or of Asia Minor.

Again, it is alleged that the abrupt cessation of the history, after the arrival at Rome, implies that Theophilus was himself present during the Apostle's residence in that city. But this is equally explained, if the history were written in the course of that residence, since the time of its composition would impose the same limit as before. And indeed the two last verses seem quite unnatural, if Theophilus were then at Rome, so as to be one of those who resorted to the Apostle and received his instructions in the faith of Christ.

The same writer endeavours to account for the structure of the history from the supposed change of the writer's usual residence. He conceives that he was in Palestine, until the gospel reached Antioch, and that not long after he removed to Troas, so that the first nine chapters, and the twelve last, were written from direct, the intermediate portion from indirect information. And hence that the book has no regular plan, or unity of idea,

but is moulded simply by the locality of the writer, and his more abundant or more scanty materials. Even Tholuck in part adopts this view, and says that the book is "in one respect unsatisfactory as an historical work, because it wants unity of plan."

This notion, however, will be found on examination to be very erroneous. The history has a perfect unity of plan. It describes in succession all the main stages in the transfer of the gospel from the Jews to the Gentiles, and from Jerusalem, the holy city of the prophets, to Rome, the metropolis of the Gentile world. A constant, regular progression, is observable in its whole course, from Jerusalem to Judea, from Judea to Samaria, from Samaria to Damascus, Cyprus and Antioch, from Antioch to the whole of Syria and Cilicia, and thence to Phrygia and Galatia, to Macedonia and Achaia, and all the remaining portions of Asia Minor; and finally, after the deliberate resistance and rejection of the gospel at Jerusalem, to Rome itself, which is indicated, as early as the nineteenth chapter, to be the designed terminus of the whole history.

Let us now consider more fully the indications, which the narrative contains, that it was probably written, in the first place, for a Gentile proselyte, become a convert to the Christian faith, whose residence was in the neighbourhood of Antioch.

1. First, it appears from the previous remarks that Theophilus had a general, but not a minute acquaintance with the geography of Palestine. Districts, little known to the Italians, as Iturea, Trachonitis, and Abilene, are mentioned without a word of comment; but it is stated that Capernaum and Nazareth were in Galilee, that Gadara was over against it, on the other side of the lake, that Emmaus was sixty furlongs, and the Mount of Olives a sabbath day's journey, from Jerusalem. The latter expression, with the mention of the second-first sabbath, and of the preparation, would be most natural, if Theophilus were already familiar with the Jewish customs and festivals. The mention, also, of Herod the tetrarch, his brother Philip, and

and Lysanias, of Herod the king, of king Agrippa and Bernice, would imply some familiarity, on the part of Theophilus, with the political condition and changes of Palestine, which a resident in or near Antioch would naturally possess. It appears also, from comparing Luke xii. 59—xxi. 2, with Matt. v. 26, and Mark xii. 42, that he was accustomed to the Greek, rather than to the Roman coinage.

The first mention of Antioch is in the description of Nicolas, one of the seven deacons, who was a proselyte of that city. There is no reason apparent, on the face of the narrative, why the fact should be specified, since all the other deacons are named without any description. But if Theophilus were also “a proselyte of Antioch,” it would be natural to notice the fact that another Gentile proselyte, like himself, and of the same city, had been so early promoted to an honourable office in the mother church of Jerusalem.

3. The formal mention of the spread of the gospel to Antioch, and the foundation of the church in that city, occurs at the close of Acts xi. It is there introduced by a peculiar phrase of transition, *οἱ μὲν οὖν*, which the context alone is hardly sufficient to explain. It will be explained, however, if Theophilus was familiar with the fact that the gospel had reached Antioch, and that a flourishing church had been formed, and only needed to have a brief explanation of the circumstances and occasion, under which the message first arrived. It is clear that Antioch now becomes the central point of the narrative, until the journey into Europe begins. Yet no discourse in that city is recorded, like those at Jerusalem, at Cæsarea, at the Pisidian Antioch, or still later at Athens. The whole character of the passage agrees with the idea, that Theophilus, as well as St. Luke, knew the city, and the actual state of the church; and that the latter confined himself to a brief explanation of the cause which led to the extension of that church, of the pre-eminence it enjoyed as the birth-place of the Christian name, and the incident which led to the next visit of Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem.

4. There are two other intervals in the history, of which Antioch is the scene, after the return from Jerusalem, and before the next visit to the council. These must have occupied together about four years. Yet not one fact is placed on record with regard to the labours of the Apostles, during their stay in that city. After the historian has brought Paul and Barnabas back again to Antioch, he passes all in silence until they leave it for their first circuit, and on their return, he merely observes that they abode there a long time with the disciples. There is in each case a distinct break in the very form of the narrative. Now if Theophilus was familiar with the local history of that church, this silence of the writer receives its simplest explanation. In the whole of this circuit, there is every sign that Theophilus was acquainted with the localities of Asia Minor, since no explication occurs in any one instance. For in Acts xiv. 6, the order of the original is different from the received version, and the more correct rendering will be, 'and they fled unto the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra and Derbe, and the neighbourhood.' The dialect of Lycaonia, which has exercised the research of modern critics, is also alluded to without any comment, and Iconium and Attalia are mentioned in the same manner. The correct reading ejects the adverb, *ἐκεῖ*, *there*, from the last verse, and thus confirms the general impression, that Antioch was the local centre of thought to Theophilus, and was so regarded by the historian.

5. Only one other visit of St. Paul to Antioch is recorded in the history, and with the same brevity. After he left Corinth, "having landed at Cæsarea, and gone up and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch. And having spent some time, he went forth, journeying in order over the country of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples." The brevity of the account, here also, is very apparent.

6. The mention of the towns of Greece and Macedonia seems to imply that Theophilus was not familiar with that peninsula, except with the route through Corinth to Rome. Thus Philippi

is explained to be "the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony." The fact is stated, as if otherwise not known to Theophilus, that the synagogue of the Jews was in Thessalonica, not at Philippi, Amphipolis, or Apollonia. On the other hand, Cenchrea, the port of Corinth, is assumed to be known. The upper coasts are also mentioned familiarly, as a well-known phrase for the inland and eastern part of the Asiatic peninsula, and the places on the route from Troas to Cæsarea are put down without further comment. All this agrees well with the idea that the residence of Theophilus was somewhere on that line of coast.

7. Two names are introduced abruptly in the narrative, that of Jason at Philippi, and that of Alexander at Ephesus. "They assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people." "And when they had taken security of Jason and of the others, they let them go." "And they drew Alexander out to the multitude, the Jews putting him forward." It is not easy to determine the exact reason of this peculiarity. Of Jason we only know that he was a kinsman of St. Paul, and sent a salutation from Corinth to the Roman Christians. Hence the manner in which he is introduced is quite consistent with the view which makes Theophilus a Roman resident. But since Jason was related to the Apostle, who was a Jew of Cilicia, there is an equal probability that he would be known to the Syrian and Cilician churches, before his residence at Thessalonica. Again if Alexander be the same who was excommunicated by St. Paul at Ephesus, his name and character would be probably known to the Eastern Christians.

8. The passage xii. 25—xiii. 1, seems to imply that Antioch was the local centre of thought, both to the writer himself and to Theophilus. For the return of Barnabas and Saul is mentioned, without naming the place to which they returned, though a whole chapter has intervened. Again, the phrase in the following verse is very peculiar. "Now there were in Antioch, in the existing church, prophets and teachers." It is difficult to understand why

the simpler expression "in the church of Antioch," or "in the church that was at Antioch," should not have been used, unless it was meant to imply that these teachers belonged to the same church, which Theophilus knew to exist in Antioch when the narrative was composed. They might be thus paraphrased. "There were at Antioch, in the church which is well known to you as now existing there, prophets and teachers; and some of the more eminent, with whose names you are already familiar, besides Barnabas and Saul, were Simeon Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, the foster-brother of Herod." This last circumstance would be more likely to have interest for a Syrian than for a Roman convert.

9. There is a remarkable difference between the manner of introducing Mark and Timothy to the notice of the reader. The former is spoken of as a person already known, Acts xii. 12, 25; xiii. 5, 13, but Timothy as a stranger. Now if Theophilus were converted at Rome, during St. Paul's imprisonment, both of them would, in all probability, be equally known to him, since both were present with the Apostle at that time. But if he resided in or near Antioch, the difference can be explained. For Mark was twice at Antioch, once before the first circuit of the Apostle, and again after the council at Jerusalem, and he seems to have returned to the east in the latter part of St. Paul's imprisonment (Col. iv. 10). But Timothy could not have been at Antioch, from the time of his joining St. Paul to the date of the history, except it were on the visit Acts xviii. 22. Even at that time we have no proof that he was present, and if he were, the visit seems to have been short and hasty. Hence, if Theophilus dwelt near Antioch, St. Mark, it is likely, would be personally known to him, and Timothy unknown, except by reputation.

10. The expression Acts xviii. 1, that Paul "went through the upper parts," appears to indicate the residence of Theophilus in or near the peninsula of Asia Minor. For the phrase is elliptical, and denotes evidently the eastern portion of that

peninsula, farthest from the *Ægean*. Hence it would be more likely to be used in writing to one familiar with the geography of that peninsula, and with the terms in popular use to distinguish the inland parts from the western provinces, than in addressing a native or resident of Italy.

11. The account of the stay at Ephesus lends us help towards some negative conclusions on the abode of Theophilus. Clearly he was not a resident near Ephesus, from the mention of the school of Tyrannus, and of Demetrius, as a place and person unknown. He was neither a Macedonian, nor present with St. Paul in his imprisonment at Rome, since Gaius and Aristarchus were alike unknown to him, and have to be specified as companions of the Apostle, and men of Macedonia. He was familiar, however, with the office of the Asiarchs, of the town-clerk, and of the Roman courts and provincial regulations. The account of the voyage, that follows, implies a general acquaintance with the coast line of Asia Minor, which is equally apparent in the later part of the narrative.

12. The account of the stay at Jerusalem, though it offers no decisive evidence, appears to indicate a Syrian rather than an Italian locality, in the person addressed. The expression, "Paul went in with us unto James," would be familiar at Antioch, where "certain who came from James" (Gal. ii. 12), had caused such dissension in the church, but would need explaining to a recent Italian convert. It seems implied that Trophimus the Ephesian was not personally known to Theophilus, but that he was acquainted with the appearance of the Egyptian false prophet, and the character of the Sicarii, the Jewish nickname for Christians, the marriage of Felix with Drusilla, and the relationship and government of Agrippa and Bernice. All these indications agree better with a residence of Theophilus in Syria than in Italy.

13. The narrative of the voyage itself will be found to agree better with the same hypothesis, though an opposite conclusion has been sometimes drawn from it. And first, the expression,

“that we should sail away into Italy,” is suited rather to a position at Antioch than at Rome. If St. Luke and Theophilus were actually at Rome, the simple verb, “to sail into Italy,” would be more natural. The mention of Aristarchus shows plainly that he was a stranger to Theophilus. “They sailed under Cyprus, the winds being contrary,” which means clearly, on its eastern and northern side. Now it seems more natural to interpret the phrase with reference to some fixed point of comparison, than to the variable direction of the wind, and the under side of the island would be the north-eastern to a resident in Cilicia or Syria. In like manner the eastern part of Crete, by Salmone, is regarded as the under side. Theophilus is plainly supposed to be familiar with the Jewish fast, on the day of Atonement, as indicative of a particular season of the year, but unacquainted with the southern coast of Crete, the situation of the Fair Havens and Phenice, and the very existence of the islet, Claudia. Melita or Malta is described, if not as entirely unknown to him, at least as unfamiliar, or else the expression would be, “they recognized that the island *was* Melita.” The term, *barbarians*, applied to its inhabitants, implies that Theophilus lived in the midst of a Greek population. The brief mention of Syracuse, Rhegium, Puteoli, Tres Tabernæ, and Appii Forum, implies only such a knowledge of geography, in the main approach to Rome, as an educated provincial would naturally share with the inhabitants of Italy. The only reasonable doubt relates to Puteoli, since Josephus uses the name Dicæarchia, and adds that the Italians call it Puteoli. Both names, however, were probably familiar, and St. Luke, having just resided for two years in Rome, would naturally employ the name which was current there. The expression, “from thence the brethren came to meet us, as far as Appii Forum and the Three Taverns,” implies strongly that the writer was not actually at Rome, or else the word “thence” would be omitted. Again, if Theophilus resided at Rome, he would probably be aware already that there were disciples at Puteoli, while the language of the historian clearly

implies the reverse. A convert, however, in Syria, while he would know that there was a church at Rome, could not be expected to know that there was one at Puteoli also. The phrase, again, "when we came to Rome," agrees best with the supposition that neither the writer nor Theophilus were actually there, when the words, *παραγενομένων ἡμῶν*, would probably be employed, without specifying the place, just as in the case of the Roman Jews. The mention, also, of Paul's residence for two years in a hired house of his own, would be superfluous, if Theophilus were one of his Roman converts, and residing in the city.

All these observations converge to the same result, that the residence of Theophilus was in or near Antioch. This agrees perfectly with the usual tradition of early writers, that St. Luke himself was a native or a resident of that city. In this case the publication of the history may perhaps be fixed, within very narrow limits. It could not have been published, until two full years after St. Paul had arrived at Rome. St. Luke remained with him there, until the letters had been sent to Ephesus, Colosse, and Philemon, when the prospect of his release was so hopeful, that Philemon was instructed to prepare him a lodging. At the date, however, of the letter to the Philippians, St. Luke seems to have been absent. The two years were probably then complete, and the Apostle's release was close at hand. The places to which the Evangelist was most likely to return were Cæsarea, Antioch, Troas, and Philippi. But Epaphroditus and Timothy were both sent to Philippi, and hence it is probable that St. Luke had gone to Cæsarea or Antioch, or to both successively. This is the more likely, as he had been absent from Antioch, at the very least, five years. Assuming him to have returned to the church of Antioch, the interest attaching to the voyage of St. Paul, his persecution at Jerusalem, and his detention at Rome, must have awakened a lively emotion in that place, one of the chief scenes of his early labours. The presence, too, of Theophilus, to whom the gospel had been addressed, would be a further motive to St. Luke for composing this second

narrative, or for completing and publishing it, if already composed. But the freshness of the style in the closing chapters, and the want of any allusion to St. Paul's release, make it highly probable that it was published before any tidings of his departure from Italy had reached St. Luke at Antioch. We may assign it, then, to the latter half of A.D. 63, and the deviation of a single year, earlier or later, would involve a considerable degree of historical improbability.

The date thus ascertained will serve to throw much light on the question respecting the time of publication of the three first gospels. It has been shewn, by a great amount of internal evidence, that they were composed in their actual order, and that each later Evangelist was acquainted with the gospel or gospels previously written. But the gospel of St. Luke was plainly written before the Book of Acts, which refers to it in the opening verse, and is its historical continuation. Three successive dates have therefore to be assigned, before A.D. 63, for the dates of these three gospels, and the first of them cannot reasonably be placed later than about A.D. 50, or about twenty years from the date of the crucifixion.

The history in the Book of Acts plainly separates into three main portions. The first reaches from the Ascension to the close of ch. xi., and to the rise of the church at Antioch. The second is a period of transition, ch. xii.—xv., and ends with the vision at Troas, and the passing over of the gospel into Europe, while the third reaches onward to the close of the history. In each of these periods the church had a different character and position. In the first it was entirely or mainly Jewish, and only began, towards the close of the period, to have an accession of Gentile converts. In the second, the Gentile converts were more numerous, but the Jewish element still prevailed, and the footing on which the Gentiles were to be received had not been the subject of a public and formal decision. In the third, after the council at Jerusalem, the gospel was preached still more widely, larger accessions from the Gentiles were gathered in, and many churches consisted mainly of recent converts from heathen idolatry.

Now the first gospel, on the most general view, has clear signs of a special adaptation to Jewish readers. The second, which is based upon it, retains in part the same character ; but all the modifications are such as to render it more suitable than the first for Gentile converts, as in ch. vii., where there is a formal explanation of Jewish traditions and usages. The third gospel, again, is plainly adapted for Greeks, rather than for Jews, and for those who were not familiar with the minute geography of Judea and Galilee. There is thus a general and marked agreement between the character of these three gospels, and the three successive periods of St. Luke's narrative, within the course of which they must have been written, at intervals, and in succession. And hence there will arise a considerable presumption that the first gospel belongs to the first period A.D. 30—44, the second to the second period A.D. 44—50, and the gospel of St. Luke to the third and last period, or A.D. 50—63, so that each would be specially adapted to the state of the church at the time when it was written.

Again, the chief centres from which the gospel spread successively, it appears from the Book of Acts, were Jerusalem, Cæsarea, Antioch, Corinth, Ephesus, and finally Cæsarea and Rome. But several years would probably elapse at each place, and especially at Jerusalem, before the want would be felt of a written gospel for the new converts. Now the first gospel was clearly written in and for Palestine, and probably therefore in the mother church of Jerusalem. The third gospel of St. Luke, it results from the previous inquiry, was written in and for Antioch, the third of these historical centres. And hence a further presumption that the three earliest centres of the Christian Church, Jerusalem, Cæsarea, and Antioch, were really the places where these three gospels were respectively composed. It will be the object of the following chapters to confirm these general presumptions, and add to their precision, by a more complete and inductive inquiry with regard to each gospel.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE DATE AND AUTHENTICITY OF ST. LUKE'S GOSPEL.

THE general review of the history in the Book of Acts, compared with the distinctive features of the three first gospels, would lead us to a probable inference, that St. Luke wrote his gospel during the period A.D. 50—63, between the date of the council at Jerusalem, and the close of his own history. We have now to combine the evidence, which enables us to fix its date within narrower limits.

I. First, the gospel seems to have been written at some interval before the Book of Acts. Several writers, indeed, as Professor Tholuck, and Greswell, in his valuable Dissertations, have held an opposite opinion, that they were written in immediate succession. But a close comparison will justify the assertion, just made, of a separation between them. The gospel is evidently complete in itself; more complete in one respect than the two others, since it contains a brief account of our Lord's Ascension. This deviation from their example would be less probable, if the writer was then purposing to continue the history in a second work. The first twelve verses in the Book of Acts merely repeat and enlarge the account at the close of the gospel, before the narrative advances one step further. This naturally implies that there was some interval of time between the two works, and that the writer had the distinct impression of beginning entirely anew. The space of forty days is also mentioned only

in the Acts, while the gospel reports the events of the first and last days only, without any formal transition between them. This is another feature of the same kind, which implies that the composition was discontinuous. Again, it is said in the gospel that our Lord led his disciples as far as Bethany. But the Book of Acts, instead of continuing with the words—"then returned they from Bethany," gives another statement, complete in itself, and independent. "Then returned they to Jerusalem from the Mount, which is called the Mount of Olives, which is nigh to Jerusalem, distant a Sabbath-day's journey." The Preface of the Gospel, also, gives no trace of a purpose, at that time, to continue the history farther than those who had written before him. The writer intends to give Theophilus simply a narrative of our Lord's own ministry, death, and resurrection, which were the essential basis of Christian doctrine. There is also a certain difference of style between the two works, which tends to confirm the same view, that an interval of some years occurred before the later work was written.

II. The next mark of time is more definite. In 1 Tim. v. 17, 18, we find the following passage: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially them that labour in word and doctrine. For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn; and, The labourer is worthy of his reward." St. Paul here makes two short quotations, to confirm his own injunction, and calls them alike by the name of Scripture. The former is taken from Deut. xxv. 4, and has been quoted by him before in a previous epistle, 2 Cor. vii. 9. The latter occurs *verbatim* Luke x. 7, in the Mission of the Seventy, and is a sentence of our Lord on the very subject of which St. Paul is speaking, the maintenance of Christ's ministers. The plain and simple inference is, that St. Paul here quotes St. Luke's gospel, as Scripture, on the same footing of authority with the law of Moses. Such a quotation implies further, that the gospel was already known to Timothy, and accepted by Christians as part of the written code of the

New Testament. Such a currency and acceptance may reasonably be held to imply a previous circulation of eight or ten years.

The date of the first Epistle to Timothy may be safely fixed, from the evidence in the *Horæ Paulinæ et Apostolicæ*, to the autumn of A.D. 64, or A.D. 65. And hence we may infer, with considerable probability, that A.D. 57 is the latest date that can be assigned to the gospel of St. Luke.

III. The passage, 2 Cor. viii. 18—21, has to be next considered. Origen, Jerome, and the pseudo-Ignatius, all refer these words to St. Luke and his gospel, and the same view has been held by Grotius, Hammond, Whitby, and many other critics in modern times. This reference, however, has been rejected by Lardner, Michaelis, and the majority of recent critics, being inconsistent with their opinion of the later origin of the gospel. But since the last argument has made it probable that it was written as early as A.D. 57, the very year of the Epistle, if it can be shewn that St. Luke is the person meant, it will be a natural inference that St. Paul refers to the written gospel.

1. First, St. Luke is the person to whom St. Paul here alludes. He is distinguished by a specific mark, that he had been selected by the churches of Macedonia their joint trustee with the Apostle in conveying their alms to Jerusalem. "We have sent with him our brother, whose praise in the gospel is in all the churches; and not only so, but who has been chosen by the churches to travel along with us with this grace, which is administered by us, to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind; avoiding this, that no man blame us in this abundance which is administered by us; providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men."

It is plain, from these latter clauses, that St. Paul does not refer to a general association of this brother with himself in spreading the gospel, but means a special selection to be his fellow-traveller, in conveying the alms from Macedonia to the Church at Jerusalem.

Now the Book of Acts gives a list of all his companions on

that voyage, Sopater of Berea, Aristarchus, Secundus of Thessalonica, Gaius of Derbe, Timothy, Tychicus and Trophimus, and St. Luke himself, the historian. Of these Timothy is excluded, because his name is joined with St. Paul's in the superscription of the letter, so that he could not have been one of the messengers to Corinth. Sopater, Aristarchus and Secundus, and probably Gaius, were all Macedonians, and 2 Cor. xi. 4 shows that these messengers were not "men of Macedonia." Tychicus, Trophimus, and Luke, are thus the only persons, who could be meant by the Apostle. We have no proof in the history that Tychicus accompanied St. Paul as far as Jerusalem, while we know that this was the case with the two others. Both of them, it is probable, accompanied Titus on this visit to Corinth. But two reasons prove that St. Luke, and not Trophimus, is the brother first named, who received a special commission to take charge of the contribution. He alone, of all the companions, set out with St. Paul, the others having gone before to Troas, Acts xx. 6. But a companion, who was absent at the outset, would not satisfy the full purpose of the appointment, which was to provide things honest in the sight of men, and to shield St. Paul from the malicious charge of having purloined a part of the contribution. And again, he is the only person of whom we can be sure that he was with the Apostle, when the charge was resigned, and the alms reached their destination. "The next day Paul went in with us unto James, and all the elders were present." This very care of the writer to specify his own presence with St. Paul, at the beginning and end of the journey, seems to imply a consciousness of the joint commission he had received, and of his desire to record its fulfilment. Again, St. Luke was a preacher of the gospel, when St. Paul crossed over into Europe, two years before a church was founded at Ephesus, while Trophimus was a Gentile of that city, and probably a convert during St. Paul's residence. Hence the proof seems to be morally complete, that the commendation in the letter belongs to St. Luke, and no other person.

2. Secondly, the description of this brother, "whose praise in the gospel is in all the churches," ought naturally to be referred to his known character as an Evangelist, and writer of the third gospel, which bears his name. Such was the view of Origen, Jerome, and Chrysostom, and it has been forsaken by many recent critics on very insufficient grounds. Besides their supposition that the gospel was of later date, they urge that such a use of the word, for a written composition, is also of later origin, and does not occur in the New Testament.

This objection, however, is of no real weight. When once the term was in general use among Christians, to denote the great facts of Christianity, the application of it to any written narrative of those facts would be spontaneous and inevitable. An usage so natural, so directly resulting from the necessary laws of thought, could not require many years for its introduction. *The Lord's supper, the Lord's day, and the church*, as a place of worship, 1 Cor. xi. 22, are phrases which occur only once in the New Testament, but have all become usual in later times. The circumstance that each of these, as also *the gospel*, for a written work, occurs once only, is no disproof of a meaning that results from the context in each instance. If the gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark had been published several years at the date of the letter, there would certainly have been time for such an application of the term to become frequent. In fact, the opening words of St. Mark tend at once to this very usage, where he speaks of "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." And even if no other gospel had been written, the use of the term by St. Paul, in referring to the composition of St. Luke, would be quite natural. For if this were the most appropriate name for such a narrative, by which it was to be constantly known afterwards, who could be more suitable than the Apostle himself to set the example of this usage to other Christians? But since two gospels, as it appears from the previous inquiry, had been written before it, both the general laws of thought, and the heading of St. Mark's narrative, make it highly probable

that this use of the term had actually begun, some years before the Apostle wrote his letter to Corinth.

The passage itself, when fairly weighed, proves this to be the true meaning. It has been shewn that St. Luke, and no other, is the party here described. Now the words are a definition, by which he might be identified and distinguished from all the other companions of the Apostle. The arrangement of the two clauses deserves notice. "We have sent with him the brother, whose praise in the gospel is in all the churches, and not only so, but who has been chosen, &c." First, we have a character by which he was widely known to others, and to the Corinthians themselves; and next, an additional honour, and proof of general confidence, which he had just received. The office of preaching the gospel was shared by St. Luke with a hundred others, and among these, with every one of the brethren who were then present with the Apostle. But there were two persons only, Mark and Luke, not Apostles themselves, who were honoured to be the authors of a written gospel, received and owned by all the churches. Of these Mark was not at that time a companion of St. Paul, and had not been for several years; and his gospel, if known at all in Greece, would be far less likely to command speedy notice and general honour, than that of St. Luke, which contains such a large amount of original information. Since St. Paul does not name the brother of whom he speaks, the description must have been, to the Corinthians, equivalent to the mention of his name. "We have sent," not a brother, or one out of many, but "*the* brother, whose praise in the gospel is in all the churches." On this very journey Titus had two companions, who were "messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ." Since it has been proved that Luke is the person meant, and highly probable, from the quotation, 2 Tim. v. 19, that his gospel was already written, while the phrase is plainly a definition, the proof seems to be complete, that St. Paul alludes to him with honour and affection, as the author of that gospel which still bears his name.

IV. This conclusion will be further confirmed from the history of the Evangelist. It will thus appear to be probable that his gospel was written about six years before the date of the letter, so that copies of it might have been already known and read in the churches of Macedonia and Achaia. The description, given of him by St. Paul, would thus be most significant, and accurately true, at the time when the letter was sent to Corinth.

St. Luke, from his own narrative, joined St. Paul at Troas, before he crossed into Europe, to preach the gospel in Macedonia. He appears to have stayed behind at Philippi, while Paul, Silas, and Timothy went on to Thessalonica and Corinth. No hint of his presence is given, till we again find him with St. Paul at Philippi, five years later, before the voyage to Jerusalem. From 2 Cor. viii. 18, 19, we may infer that he was known at Corinth by reputation, rather than by personal acquaintance. He was chosen by the churches of Macedonia to be joint trustee with the Apostle, which is a presumption that he had resided some time among them. Among St. Paul's other companions on that voyage, we have one from Berea, and two from Thessalonica, and we may well suppose that Philippi had some representative in the little company, as it took precedence of the other churches in his love. Acts xvi. 12. Phil. iv. 15, 16. Hence it is likely that St. Luke himself was its representative, and had spent most of the interval in that city. Yet he would be not unlikely to have visited Jerusalem and Antioch again, drawn to one by the sacred festivals, and to the other by his own conversion, and previous residence. The gospel might thus be well known to the Churches of Greece in A.D. 57, whether it were written before the entrance into Europe, or during the earlier part of his residence at Philippi.

Theophilus, however, it has been shewn by probable evidence, was a Gentile proselyte of rank, living in or near Antioch. Hence it is likely that the gospel would be written, while St. Luke was residing there, rather than at Philippi; and the notes of time, Luke iii. 1, seem exactly

suited to a Syrian Greek, writing at Antioch. The full details in Acts xvi. are a clear sign that Theophilus did not reside at Philippi, and was not acquainted with the origin of that church, or the geography of the province. And even if St. Luke had paid a short visit to Antioch after the first entrance into Europe, the occasion seems less natural for the work, than a continued residence with Theophilus in that city. Other reasons equally forbid us to place its composition much earlier. And hence a probable date will be A.D. 51, after the departure of Paul and Silas from Antioch, before the Evangelist joined them at Troas on their way to Philippi. In this case it would have been published six years, when St. Paul alluded to it in the letter to Corinth; and thirteen years, when he quoted it, as inspired Scripture, like the law of Moses, in writing to the beloved Timothy.

The circumstances under which St. Luke joined the Apostle agree well with this supposition. He did not travel with Paul and Silas, when they set out from Antioch, nor during their circuit through Syria, Cilicia, Phrygia, and Galatia, which probably occupied nearly a whole year. By a special direction of the Spirit, they were hindered from preaching in Bithynia, and guided to Troas on the sea coast. Here we find St. Luke not only in their company, but a sharer in their public commission. "After he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel unto them." The silence of the writer seems to imply that Theophilus knew the circumstances under which he joined them, and the nature of his own claim to a share in their public commission. If he had spent the time since their departure, in completing his gospel at Antioch, Theophilus would clearly know what had detained him, and the call he had afterwards received to take part in their labours. The same Spirit, who suffered not Paul and Silas to go into Bithynia, but guided them to Troas, might equally have directed St. Luke, by

one of the prophets at Antioch, to go down to that seaport and join their little company.

V. The gospel was plainly written with a special reference to Greek converts. When their number had become large, in districts remote from Palestine, and writing had already been used in the instruction of the churches, a gospel suited to their wants would hardly be long delayed. Now the first Epistle of Paul was written from Corinth, within one year from the vision at Troas. After ten years from the conversion of Cornelius, A.D. 41, and the first preaching to the Gentiles at Antioch, and seven years from the mission of Barnabas and Saul, the number of Gentile converts must have been very considerable, throughout Syria, Cilicia, and a great part of Asia Minor. A council had been held regarding them, their exemption from the Mosaic law proclaimed, and copies of its decree were circulated in Asia Minor by Paul and Silas on this very journey. The importance had thus been already felt, of setting truth before these churches in a permanent and written form. The want of a narrative of our Lord's ministry and death, suited to this numerous class of disciples, would therefore be widely perceived. Imperfect accounts would be sure to appear early, amidst so many educated Greek converts, as would be found at Antioch; and hence the date proposed, just before the Apostle's passage into Europe, agrees with the actual wants of the Church of Christ.

VI. The stay of St. Luke at Philippi, on this view of the date, acquires a practical significance. Having joined St. Paul so lately, and with an express call to preach the gospel in Macedonia along with him, why does he stay behind at the very first place, where a church is founded? His vocation, we may perhaps infer, was not so much to help in forming new churches, as to confirm and strengthen those which had been formed already. Philippi had long the foremost place in St. Paul's affection. A signal persecution was there followed by a peculiar miracle of Divine power, not repeated elsewhere, and by a remarkable conversion. It was the chief town of one of the four

divisions of Macedonia, and a maritime city. No place could be more suitable for the stay of St. Luke, if his special call were to build up believers in the young churches of Europe, by a fuller instruction in the facts and doctrines of the Christian revelation. The written gospel, if brought with him into Macedonia, would be diffused from a known centre, under Apostolic sanction, through all the churches of Macedonia and Achaia. Philippi would thus be the place from which the written gospel was diffused; as Thessalonica, for six years, was the only church favoured with an Apostolic letter. Indeed it is hard to believe that after a charge had been given for the public reading of these two letters, there had been as yet provided for the very same churches no authorized record of our Saviour's life, miracles, discourses, death, and resurrection. On the view here proposed, all is consistent and regular. St. Luke would bring his gospel with him into Macedonia; copies would be sent under his direction to the churches of Macedonia and Greece, as they were successively formed; the direct teaching of the Lord himself would take precedence of the letters of his Apostle, and St. Luke would fulfil his own share in the commission to the whole peninsula, though his residence were confined to Philippi alone.

VII. The preface to the gospel agrees well with the proposed date. It informs us, that "many had taken in hand to set forth in order a narrative of the things that were most surely believed among the early Christians, as these were set forth by the eyewitnesses and ministers of the word." Now this would be very probably-true at Antioch, ten years after the church was founded in that city. It was by far the largest of those towns which received the gospel early, and was the very birth-place of the Christian name. Many imperfect narratives would be likely to spring up, in such a place, when the gospel had once begun to spread widely among its Gentile residents, since the deepest interest would be felt in their new faith, and many of the converts, doubtless, would have received a liberal education, in that

main seat of political power, and of Greek refinement and learning. The laws of human nature must have been suspended by a miracle, or such writings would be certain to appear. They would probably be written, like St. Luke's gospel itself, to persons who were recent converts, imperfectly informed on the facts of the gospel, and would thus partake of the nature of private letters. It was important that these more hasty and imperfect reports should be superseded by a distinct and full narrative, suited especially to this class of converts ; and this is precisely what St. Luke has done. Neither the gospel of St. Matthew nor of St. Mark, from their special purpose, could entirely supply the want of these Christians of Antioch. Most of the teachers there had also been intimate with one or other of the Apostles, and there had been a continual intercourse with the mother church of Jerusalem, so that the motives for attempting a history of the Lord would exist early, and be in powerful operation.

The preface also mentions two distinct classes of Christian teachers, of whom some were eye-witnesses from the beginning, and others had only a secondary acquaintance with the gospel history. Such would clearly be the case about twenty years after our Lord's Ascension. St. Luke refers himself to the second class, and claims authority for his narrative from his diligence in collecting information, and the accurate knowledge he had gained by means of eye-witnesses. This character is peculiar to the third gospel, which has the air of an history, the fruit of research and inquiry, rather than of direct, personal observation. A writer under such circumstances would not be very likely to delay his narrative many years after his inquiries were complete. But from the arrival at Philippi to the close of the narrative, the openings for such inquiries would probably be much more limited, than during the previous residence of several years at Antioch, when the intercourse with the Apostles and teachers of the mother church must have been very frequent.

VIII. The writings of St. Luke are marked by the repeated

mention of Herod the tetrarch, and of his household. This Evangelist alone has mentioned the trial of Jesus before Herod in Jerusalem, the name of Chuza, the tetrarch's steward, of Joanna, his wife, and of Manaen, Herod's foster brother. If the gospel were written at Antioch, while Manaen was still an eminent teacher of that church, many facts respecting Herod, and his intercourse with the Jews and with Jesus might be learned from him, and Chuza and Joanna, as well as Manaen, might be known by name to Theophilus and many others. But the later we place the composition of the gospel, the less probable would be this introduction of particulars, relative to Herod, which are found no where else in the New Testament.

IX. There is an allusion, Luke xiii. 1—6, to certain Galileans, whom Pilate had slain while they were offering their sacrifices. They are introduced definitely, so as to imply that the fact was already familiar to most readers. The event took place, it is probable, two or three months before the crucifixion, and occasioned the feud between Herod and Pilate, which the latter healed at that time, by a compliment paid to Herod's jurisdiction over Galilee. But if the history came thirty years after the event, this definite mode of expression would be less suitable than at the distance of twenty years, proposed above for the date of the gospel. The memory of those earlier troubles under Pilate, would be revived by the slaughter at the Passover, A.D. 49 or 50, in the procuratorship of Cumanus, only one or two years before the time when the gospel was probably written at Antioch. The recollection of a similar catastrophe, which had occurred twenty years earlier, would thus be likely to recur powerfully to the minds of the Syrian readers.

X. The mention of the Census, Luke ii. 2, which has been made a chief reason for impeaching St. Luke's accuracy of knowledge, will be found, on inquiry, to confirm the view that his gospel was written at Antioch, and at an early date. Its difficulty, and the amount of discussion it has caused, require a careful examination of its meaning.

The words in Greek are these, *Αὕτη ἡ ἀπογράφη πρώτη ἐγένετο ἡγεμονεύοντος τῆς Συρίας Κυρηναίου*, for which six or seven versions have been proposed. 1. This taxing was first made, when Cyrenius was governor of Syria, (E. T. and Strauss). 2. The taxing itself was first made, when Cyrenius was governor of Syria, (Whiston, Hales, Paulus). 3. This taxing first took effect &c. (Calvin, Valesius). 4. This enrolment was the first that was made, Cyrenius being extraordinary governor, (Beza, Grotius, Browne). 5. This is the first enrolment of Cyrenius, while governing Syria, (Scaliger). 6. This is the first enrolment of Cyrenius, the governor (i. e. who afterwards became governor) of Syria, (Lardner, Paley). 7. This enrolment took place before Cyrenius was governor of Syria, (Theophylact, Herwart, Tholuck, Gresswell). Of these the first is either unmeaning, or is virtually the same with the third, and the sixth is opposed to the plain laws of Greek syntax, where the article is absent. The second and third are open to the same historical objection, since they separate the decree by ten years from its execution; while the context seems to imply that it took place at once, and there is no hint, in the other accounts of the later taxing, that it was the execution of an earlier decree. Besides this, the fundamental objection applies, that *ἀπογράφη* cannot denote the taxing, as contrasted with the enrolment, and that *ἐγένετο* cannot be rendered "took effect" without real violence. The fourth and fifth, with a slight grammatical difference, involve the common supposition, that the census was during an extraordinary commission of Cyrenius, and different from another made in his ordinary presidency. The choice really lies between one of these, and the last construction, which receives the words as a simple notice, to distinguish the event from the later census in the presidency of Cyrenius.

1. First, it is plain that St. Luke, in these words, never meant to identify this census with the later one to which he alludes, Acts v. 37, and which was certainly in the presidency of Cyrenius. This is clear from the words alone, since the word *πρωτη* would

be unmeaning on this view, and the clause could only receive such a sense by omitting it entirely. But historically, this is just as plain. The census of Cyrenius and the death of Augustus were only eight years asunder. That census was clearly familiar to the writer, from his allusion to it in Acts v. 37, without a word of explanation. The death of Augustus must have been equally familiar to a writer, who names the tetrarchs of Galilee, Trachonitis, and Abila, and numbers the years of Tiberius. But in the next chapter, the ministry of John is referred to the fifteenth of Tiberius, and the age of Jesus, when baptized soon afterwards, is said to be thirty years. No writer of common sense could place the birth of our Lord at a time, familiarly known to be about eight years before the death of Augustus, and then say, in a few verses after, that he was about thirty years old in the fifteenth of Tiberius. This would not be an historical error, so much as a gross arithmetical blunder. In both grounds, then, of grammar and historical common sense, it is impossible that the Evangelist can here have identified his census with the later and more noted enrolment in the time of Cyrenius.

2. There is no historical evidence, apart from this passage, that Cyrenius was employed in an earlier census. An inscription with reference to the enrolment of Apamea has been quoted by some writers, in proof that he was so employed. But the later census, in A.D. 6, was not confined to Judea, as Sanclemente and Browne have asserted. It is plain from Josephus that it included the whole of Syria; so that the inscription must naturally be referred to this same conspicuous enrolment. It is also doubtful whether St. Luke would have used the term “*ἡγεμονεύοντος*” for an extraordinary commission. But still further, if Cyrenius had then been present, there seems no reason why the writer should have specified the fact; since it would only tend, without fuller explanation, to defeat his purpose, and to confound the census with another, far more commonly associated with his name, as the president of Syria.

3. The form here used, *ἡγεμονεύοντος τῆς Συρίας Κυρηνίου*, is

the same which St. Luke employs elsewhere in the definition of time, and is constantly so employed by classic writers, both with and without a preposition. We have instances in Luke iii. 1, 2. Acts xviii. 12, where the construction is precisely similar. It is therefore most natural to infer that the words are here also used in the same way, and that some averment is made with reference to the time when Cyrenius was governor of Syria, just as elsewhere in regard to the time when Pilate was governor of Judea, or when Gallio was deputy of Achaia.

4. Since the census must have been distinct from that in the presidency of Cyrenius, and still the genitives must refer to that very presidency, the object of the writer must have been to note, in passing, its earlier occurrence, lest a careless reader should perplex himself by confounding them. This purpose is exactly fulfilled, if *πρότερον* be a term of comparison, and we translate, with Theophylact, Herwart, Tholuck and Greswell—"This enrolment took place, before Cyrenius' governing Syria."

5. The use of *πρότερος*, as an emphatic term of comparison, instead of *πρότερον*, has many precedents in Scripture and classic writers. Thus John i. 15, 30—xv. 18. Col. i. 15, are clear examples of this usage. In the Septuagint, 2 Sam. xix. 43, is an instance, and 1 Macc. vii. 41, *ἐσχάτη τῶν υἱῶν ἡ μητὴρ ἐτελεύτησε*. Many other examples might be given from classic authors.

6. The construction of a genitive of time with prepositions is also very common in the best writers. The extension of the same idiom to adverbs of comparison, is perhaps found in the Septuagint only. There, at least, in Jer. xxix. 2, we have a clear instance in the phrase "*ὕστερον ἐξέλθοντος Ιεχονίου τοῦ βασιλέως*," "after the going forth of Jeconiah the king." This rendering has indeed been disputed (*Ordo Sæcl.* p. 43), but without any reason, since a comparison of the Septuagint with the Hebrew shews plainly that the above is the true construction. In like manner, *ὕστερον ἡγεμονεύοντος Κυρηνίου* would certainly mean, after the

presidency of Cyrenius," and *πρότερον* κ. τ. λ., "*before* the same presidency.

7. The difficulty of the passage, in this view, arises simply from the combination of two idioms, one of which is frequent in the best classic authorities, and the other finds an exact parallel in the Septuagint, but which are not elsewhere joined together. If the words had been *πρώτη ἐγένετο τῆς Κυρηνίου απογραφῆς*, no doubt of their meaning could have well arisen. Or again, if the phrase *ἡγεμονεύοντος τῆς Συρίας Κυρηνίου*, had occurred in St. Luke, either standing alone, or with a preposition, no one would have doubted that they were a definition of time. How then can the union of the two idioms, which has occasioned so much perplexity, be explained?

The difficulty here arises from the circumstance that, in every other instance where *πρῶτος* is so employed, the genitive which follows strictly corresponds with the main subject which goes before. If, however, St. Luke wrote at a place and time, when the phrase *ἡγεμονεύοντος τῆς Συρίας Κυρηνίου* was equivalent, in the minds of his readers, to a direct mention of the later taxing, this unusual phraseology will have a sufficient explanation. The census of Cyrenius would probably give rise, from its very nature, to a thousand public and private documents, where this date would be used in this precise form. In subjects which are perfectly familiar, the best writers often consult brevity, rather than grammatical completeness, in their phraseology. St. Luke might have written, *αὕτη ἡ ἀπογραφὴ πρώτη ἐγένετο [τῆς ἀπογραφῆς, ἥτις ἐγένετο] ἡγεμονεύοντος τῆς Συρίας Κυρηνίου*. But the parenthetic words, at the time, would be instinctively supplied, because every Syrian reader of those days would at once associate the presidency of Cyrenius with the important census which he was so well known to have made; since it had been the beginning of a new era to the whole province, and the occasion of a dangerous revolt in Palestine. And conversely, the adoption of this brief and elliptical idiom is a reason for the view, already supported by other arguments, that the gospel was written at Antioch, and addressed

to a Syrian convert at an early date, or about the middle of the first century. It is highly probable that, at that period, *ἡγεμονεύοντος Κυρηναίου*, was a law term of constant occurrence in deeds and legal documents throughout Syria, or in Greek inscriptions and records, to which that noted census had given rise. If the work were written about forty-five years after that census occurred, a passing notice that this earlier taxing was distinct from it would be natural, and almost necessary ; while the unstudied form of it implies the fullest consciousness in the writer of his familiar acquaintance with Syrian history. He assumes that his readers knew of the later census, which was of great notoriety, and gives them a passing and brief caution that they must not confound it with the earlier and less conspicuous enrolment to which his narrative alludes, at the time of the Nativity.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE DATE AND AUTHORSHIP OF ST. MARK'S GOSPEL.

THE second gospel, by the unbroken testimony of early writers, is ascribed to St. Mark, an intimate companion of St. Peter, and the same person, it is universally allowed, whom he mentions at the close of his first Epistle. Opinions have been more divided on the question, whether this Mark the Evangelist be the same with John Mark, the sister's-son to Barnabas, who is mentioned five times in the Book of Acts, and three times in St. Paul's Epistles. The more general opinion is, that they are the same; but some few early writers, and a considerable number of modern critics, as Cave, Grotius, Du Pin and Tillemont, and more recently Mr. Greswell, in his Dissertations, and Da Costa, in his work, the Four Witnesses, hold them to be different. The last of these has a peculiar hypothesis of his own, that the Evangelist is probably the devout soldier, whom Cornelius sent to Peter, before his conversion.

Various dates have been assigned to the gospel. According to Irenæus, it was written after the death of St. Peter; but according to Jerome, Clemens, Papias, and the Synopsis of Athanasius, during his life-time; while Theophylact places it ten years after the Ascension. Most early writers assert it to have been published at Rome, but Chrysostom in Egypt. The external evidence, it thus appears, is rather imperfect. It becomes the more important to examine carefully the light thrown on its origin by the internal evidence of the New Testament.

I. First, the allusions and brief notices in the Acts and Epistles, yield a strong presumption that John Mark and the Evangelist are the same person. For John Mark is named five times in the Book of Acts, and the last time by his Roman surname alone. In the Epistles he is named three times, being identified by the description in the first passage, "Marcus, sister's-son to Barnabas," which proves him to be the same who is mentioned by St. Luke. In these three passages, however, no trace is left of his original name, John, and he is described simply by his surname, MARK. In Philemon 23., and 2 Tim. iv. 11, this name is used without any addition, as enough to identify him. Now in the Epistle of St. Peter, the name occurs, just in the same manner. "The church at Babylon greeteth you, and Mark my son." That John Mark was a convert of St. Peter must be highly probable from the passage Acts xii. 12, where we find that his mother had a house at Jerusalem, in which many Christians met for prayer, and that St. Peter addressed himself first to this company, when released from prison. On the other hand, it is not likely that another Mark would be mentioned in this brief manner, when John Mark was familiarly known by his second name only, and was so prominent among the early teachers of the gospel. Nor is it at all likely, to those who believe in the internal harmony of Scripture, that our only notice of the writer of one of the gospels, should be this brief expression at the close of one epistle alone, with no mention of his name, or character, or labours, in any other part of the sacred canon.

The fact that the Evangelist is called the son of Peter, and is his traditional companion, while John Mark travelled for a time with Barnabas and Paul, then with Barnabas only, and still later with St. Paul again, is no proof that they are different persons. For Sylvanus is named in the same verse by St. Peter, as his messenger, and yet he was the companion of St. Paul in his first visit to Europe, and his name appears in the superscription of the two letters to the Thessalonians. Hence a similar alternation must be just as credible in the case of the Evangelist. In fact,

it would only increase the fitness of John Mark to be the writer of a gospel, that he was the honoured companion, not only of one, but of the two most eminent Apostles. It may be further observed that the moral beauty of the record is greatly obscured, if the Mark of St. Peter's Epistle, and of St. Luke's narrative, are held to be different persons. For in the narrative, when St. Paul refused to take Mark for his companion, he chose Silas or Sylvanus. And here, in St. Peter's salutation, we find that Sylvanus is his chosen and beloved messenger, and that Mark is associated in the brotherly greeting, which Sylvanus has to convey. "By Sylvanus that faithful brother, I have written to you. . . The church in Babylon greeteth you, and Mark my son." We can hardly fail to see here an analogy to the notice, 2 Tim. iv. 11. "Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry." Timothy and Luke, as well as Silas, had seemed to replace Mark in the Apostle's friendship and society; and they are joined with him here, as Sylvanus in the other passage, in a manner which implies the most entire harmony, and the high place which they all held alike in the favour of the two chief Apostles.

These presumptions are met, apparently, by no counter evidence. For the reasons, which have been drawn from the gospel, to prove the author a Gentile soldier, will be found to admit of another explanation, while there are several features in the work, which agree better with the usual hypothesis, that the writer was one of the circumcision.

II. The first mention of John Mark occurs in Acts xii. His mother was a sister of Barnabas, who was himself a Levite of Cyprus. Many, including probably her own son, were gathered for prayer in her house, when Peter startled them by his sudden appearance. Soon after, on the return of Barnabas and Saul, he accompanied them to Antioch. When they began their first circuit, in the same or the following year, Mark was still with them. He accompanied them throughout Cyprus, but left them at Perga, and returned to Jerusalem, and thereby incurred St. Paul's

serious displeasure. No mention of him is then given, till after the council, when it appears from Gal. ii. 10, that St. Peter came down to Antioch. Mark was now present there again, Acts xv. 37—39, and Barnabas, against the judgment of Paul, selected him for his companion. The dispute, thus occasioned, led to their separation, and Barnabas and Mark sailed to Cyprus, while Paul chose successively Silas and Timothy, and visited the churches of Asia Minor. From this point, the Book of Acts gives us no further light on his history. We learn, however, from Col. iv. 10, that, within the ten years that followed, he had been restored to St. Paul's favour, that a charge to receive him had been given to the Phrygian Christians, and that he was present with the Apostle in the second year of his imprisonment at Rome, and had been a special comfort and help to him by his labours in the gospel. At the date of St. Peter's first epistle, he was with that Apostle in Babylon, which seems, for several reasons, to be the old Babylon of Mesopotamia, and neither Rome, nor Babylon in Egypt. Still later, when St. Paul was a second time imprisoned at Rome, Mark was in Asia Minor, not far from Ephesus, and was sent for by that Apostle, along with Timothy, to receive his dying instructions and commands. Early tradition reports that he became the first bishop of the church at Alexandria, and assigns that city for the final scene of his labours and his death.

III. To fill up this outline, we must ascertain, if possible, the date of St. Peter's first Epistle. No good reason can be given for the view, which has prevailed widely, that the Epistle was written from Rome. To introduce a metaphor on such an occasion, without the least hint in the context to explain it, would be most unnatural in a letter of simple exhortation. And besides, the order in which the provinces are named indicates that the writer was in the east, and not in the west. Accordingly, it is now the usual opinion, that the letter was written from Mesopotamia, either amidst the remains of old Babylon, or from

Seleucia, which often borrowed the name, as it succeeded to the local importance, of the ancient city.

The extreme dates proposed for the letter, are A.D. 48 and 65. The former may be rejected for the plain reason, that Bethynia and Asia, two of the provinces here named, were not evangelized till some years later, when St. Paul returned from his first visit to Europe. When St. Peter wrote, churches were formed in these districts, and elders presided over them. The letter must then be later than A.D. 52, when St. Paul crossed into Macedonia.

The close of the letter will perhaps enable us to approach still nearer to its date. The true rendering seems to be, "By Sylvanus, that faithful brother, as I expect, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand." The slight uncertainty did not refer to the faithfulness of Sylvanus, which the article serves to affirm strongly, but merely to the circumstance whether he or some other would prove to be the bearer of the letter. It was addressed to five provinces; and even if Sylvanus set out with it on a circuit, it would be uncertain whether it might not reach many of them by other hands. The words τοῦ πιστοῦ ἀδελφεῦ imply that St. Peter reckoned Sylvanus eminently worthy of his confidence in the service of Christ.

Now Sylvanus or Silas accompanied St. Paul on his first circuit in Europe, till he reached Corinth, where he continued with him for some time, (2 Cor. i.) But after St. Paul's next visit to Jerusalem, no trace of his presence is found, either in the history or the letters. It is probable, then, that from this time Silas joined himself to St. Peter, or at least remained in Palestine, and journeyed to the east. Galatia is one of the five provinces to which St. Peter's letter is addressed. The churches of that district were founded by St. Paul during his second circuit, when Silas was with him. False teachers had afterwards crept in, who appealed from St. Paul to St. Peter and St. James, as higher authorities, and consequently St. Paul had been compelled, while at

Corinth, to write an urgent and sharp reproof. He would be most likely, on his next interview with St. Peter, or by the next messenger who was sent to him, to represent to him the abuse of his name in these churches, so as to encourage a dangerous perversion of the gospel. And in this case, what could be more natural than a letter from St. Peter to these and the adjoining churches, in confirmation of that pure gospel of grace, which St. Paul had proclaimed?

The words, 1 Pet. v. 12, acquire a peculiar emphasis on this view. St. Peter writes by Sylvanus, who had been present at the council to which St. Paul alludes in his letter, and had been sent to confirm the Gentile converts at Antioch in the freedom of the gospel; and who had since been joined with St. Paul, during his visit to Galatia, in proclaiming the grace of Christ. By the selection of this messenger, St. Peter would distinctly approve and testify the message which Paul and Silas had proclaimed, and which his own name had been perverted into an excuse for opposing. He gives to Silas an emphatic title of honour, "that faithful brother," and adds a brief statement of the special design of the letter, "to testify that this was the true grace of God, wherein they stood," now that they had been humbled by St. Paul's rebuke, and recovered and confirmed by his second visit. The very term employed, ἐπιμαρτυρῶν, denotes a further testimony, to confirm one already given, and applies with special force on this view of the history.

The Epistle, then, could not be written earlier than the close of A.D. 54, when St. Paul made his second visit to Galilee, nor in A.D. 61, 62, when St. Mark was with St. Paul at Rome, but most probably in the interval between these limits. Perhaps the time of St. Paul's detention at Cæsarea, half way between then, and when he was debarred from personal intercourse with these churches, would be a likely season for such a message to them from his brother Apostle. Hence A.D. 58 is probably an approximation to the real date.

We may now fill up the outline of Mark's travels, conjecturally,

as follows. When he accompanied his uncle to Cyprus, they would be likely to extend their course southward or westward, to Crete or Egypt. Crete had certainly been evangelized before St. Paul's release from Rome, and St. Mark is connected by a very constant tradition, with the church of Alexandria. He may then have returned to Jerusalem, and connected himself with St. Peter, his own father in the faith, and continued with him till the first Epistle was written, four or five years. The instruction, alluded to in Col. iv. 10, must have been given by St. Paul to the Phrygian churches some time before, and most likely on his second visit to that neighbourhood, Acts xviii. It is thus probable that at that time, Paul, Peter, Barnabas, Mark, and Silas, had a common interview, and that the two latter, leaving Paul and Barnabas, became associated with Peter in his labours to the north and east of Judea.

IV. Let us now resume the direct inquiry into the origin and date of the second gospel. It is the constant tradition of early writers, that it was written by St. Mark, either under the inspection of St. Peter, or from the memory of the Apostle's oral statements. The internal evidence agrees fully with the view. Mr. Jones, Dr. Townson, and others, have brought together a large variety of presumptions, which tend to establish it. The history, except a few verses, is limited to the time when Peter had become a companion of our Lord. The house at Capernaum is called, here only, the house of Simon and Andrew. The precedence of Peter among the Apostles is more indirectly given; his honour, in the distinctive surname, is qualified by the joint title given, as St. Mark alone informs us, to the sons of Zebedee. The benediction, which followed his confession of Christ, is not given, but the stern reproof that ensued is retained at full length. His fall is stated fully, but nothing is said of his deep repentance, or of the bitterness of his tears. No mention is found of his being the first Apostle to whom the Lord appeared after the resurrection, while the privilege of the Magdalene is expressly noticed. These features, and many others of

the same kind, confirm the tradition, that St. Peter was the chief source of the whole narrative.

V. This gospel, by most early writers, is said to have been written and published at Rome. Chrysostom, however, says that it was written in Egypt, and thus proves that the tradition of its Roman origin was not universal, while there are internal marks, which seem to prove it erroneous. Yet since Clement, Athanasius, Epiphanius, Jerome, Gregory, Cosmas and Eutychius, agree in this opinion, and it is commonly received by modern writers, it becomes necessary to account for its origin, even if weighty evidence be given for denying its truth.

The main reason urged in its favour are the Latinisms of this gospel. The following are specified by Mr. Greswell :—

1. λεγεών for Legion. 2. σπεκουλάτωρ, executioner. 3. κῆνσος, for tribute. 4. κοδράντης, *quadrans*, or *farthing*. 5. φραγελλοῦν, to scourge. 6. αὐλή, ὅ ἐστι πραιτώριον, the hall, that is, the Pretorium. 7. κεντυριων, instead of ἐκατόνταρχος, *centurion*. 8. μεσονύκτιον, for a division of the night. 9. κράββατος, *couch*. 10. οὐαὶ, *vah*, a term of contempt. 11. παιδιόθεν, *a puero*. 12. σύσσημον, a token. 13. δηνάριον, a *penny*, where Matthew has, *tribute*. 14. ἀπέχει, it is sufficient. 15. ἀλεκτοροφωνία, *gallicinium*. 16. ἄμφοδος, *ambivium*. 17. μεθόρια, *confines*.

Several of these words occur also in St. Matthew and St. Luke, and hence can be no proof that the gospel of St. Mark was specially designed for Latin readers, and still less that it was written at Rome. Thus λεγεών occurs in all three gospels; κοδράντης and φραγελλοῦν, once in St. Matthew, and once only in St. Mark; μεσονύκτιον, once in St. Mark, once in St. Luke's gospel, and twice in the book of Acts; κράββατος, five times both in St. Mark and St. John; δηνάριον, six times in Matthew, three times in Mark and Luke. Μεθόρια is also a purely Greek word. Even κουστωδία, a direct Latinism, is common to Mark with Matthew. And hence the distinctive Latinisms are perhaps three only, κεντυρίων, σπεκουλάτωρ, and οὐαὶ as a term of contempt, answering to *vah*, the Latin interjection.

Even the passage, Mark xv. 16, "the hall, that is, the Pretorium," is no proof that the gospel was designed for Roman, or even for Latin-speaking readers; since Pretorium is used by the three other evangelists, in the book of Acts, and by St. Paul in his letter to Philippi. Every Pretorium was a hall, but every hall was not a Pretorium. Technical terms of this kind, used by the governing power, are quickly adopted into the language of their subjects. And hence there is no sufficient ground, in these few words, for the conclusion that the gospel was written in Rome or Italy.

Another presumption for the same view has been drawn from xv. 21, where Simon is said to be the father of Alexander and Rufus. For St. Paul salutes Rufus and his mother among the Roman Christians. It is inferred that the Evangelist, writing at Rome, has mentioned him and his brother, because they were known residents of that city.

This inference, however, is very far from certain. For St. Paul had never been at Rome, when he wrote that letter, and still it is clear that Rufus and his mother were personally known to him. Six years before, Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome, so that Rufus must have resided elsewhere at that time. His father, Simon, was a Jew of Cyrene, not of Rome, and was attending the Passover at the time of the crucifixion. It is almost certain that his sons, even after one or both of them were become converts, would still frequent that city. The only valid inference seems to be, that Simon was dead when St. Mark wrote, but that his sons were still alive, and that they were personally known to the Evangelist, and to many of the converts whom he first addressed.

On the other hand, there are many signs in St. Mark's gospel, overlooked by those who were pre-occupied by the tradition of its Roman origin, which prove that it was addressed to residents in Palestine. The geographical notices all agree with this view, and disagree with the other. St. Luke, for instance, describes Capernaum as a city of Galilee, while St. Mark refers to it with-

out description, as a place already known. Yet surely the residents of Antioch were more likely to know its position than the inhabitants of Italy. Again, he speaks of the *κωμοπόλεις* or village-towns of Galilee, a special term that implies an acquaintance with the country. The lake of Tiberias is called simply "the sea," an usage hardly intelligible to Italians, and one which clearly implies a reference to the dwellers in Palestine. The phrase, "the other side," is used elliptically, just as in St. Matthew, while St. Luke, who wrote for more distant readers, is careful to explain it by an addition, "the other side of the lake." Gadara is referred to, as already known, in striking contrast to the third gospel. Decapolis is mentioned without the slightest explanation. Nazareth is called our Lord's "own country," though no particulars of his former residence there have been given. Bethsaida is introduced abruptly, in the miracle of the five thousand, and also the land of Gennesaret, without any further hint to explain their position. Cæsarea Philippi might perhaps be known to Italian residents, but how could they be expected to understand "the parts of Dalmanutha?" The mention of Jericho, Bethphage, Bethany, the Mount of Olives, of the house of Simon the leper, of Arimathea, and of *the country* as a general term for the vicinity of Jerusalem, are all indications of the same kind. They prove that a knowledge of comparatively obscure localities in Palestine is presupposed. No one instance is found of a geographical explanation, such as would naturally be required by the residents and natives of Italy.

The gospel further assumes, in its readers, a general acquaintance with the customs of the Jews. Thus, in i. 32, there is an implied reference to Jewish scruples about the Sabbath. The Scribes and Pharisees are spoken of, as classes familiarly known. The Jewish name, Beelzebub, is introduced without explanation. The feast of the Passover and of unleavened bread are distinguished, while St. Luke comprehends them both under the second name. The Preparation is defined as the day before the Sabbath. In all these cases, a moderate

acquaintance with Jewish usages is implied. Yet it is equally plain that this knowledge, on the part of the readers, is supposed to be partial and limited. It is explained, for instance, that the disciples of John and the Pharisees used repeated fasts, which St. Matthew assumes to be well known. In chapter vii. there is formal digression, to explain the practice of the Pharisees. The woman of Canaan, as St. Matthew calls her, receives a name more intelligible to Gentiles, "a Greek, a Syrophenician by race." In the prophecy on the Mount, the clause in the instructions for flight, "neither on the Sabbath," is omitted. The first day of unleavened bread is expounded by the description, "when they used to kill the Passover." Other examples of the same accommodation to Gentile readers may perhaps be found. The readers are supposed to know well the localities of Palestine, but not the minuter elements of Jewish customs and phraseology.

VI. From the previous inquiry we are led to the following results. The gospel of St. Mark was earlier than that of St. Luke, which was itself probably composed at Antioch, just before that Evangelist accompanied St. Paul into Europe. It was adapted, not for residents in Italy, but for Gentiles who lived in Palestine, and who were better acquainted with its outward features and localities than with the rites and customs of the Jews. The writer was also intimately connected with St. Peter, from whose information and ocular testimony he has derived the most distinctive features of his narrative.

The history of the early church, in the book of Acts, agrees remarkably with these indications. It naturally divides itself into three periods. The first reaches to the origin of the church at Antioch, and during its course the gospel was mainly confined to Palestine, among those who were Jews by birth. The second period, which reaches to the council, and the first journey into Europe, was one of transition. The Jews were still the majority of the church, but the gospel had begun to spread to the Gentiles, and included many Roman residents in Palestine, with a growing number of Greeks at Antioch and in Asia Minor. In the third

and last stage, the admission of the Gentiles was solemnly ratified by the council, and the gospel spread among them on every side with great rapidity. The gospel of St. Luke, it has been shewn, was written early in this third period, for the Greeks of Antioch. The gospel of St. Mark has all the features of the second, or transition period, and of a special adaptation to the Roman converts in and near Palestine.

The first Gentile converts were Cornelius the Roman centurion, with his friends and household servants, at Cæsarea. Here was the first nucleus of all the later accessions from the Gentiles. Cæsarea, in point of time, took precedence of Antioch itself, and was not less favourably situated as a missionary outpost for the spread of the faith. It was the main seaport of Palestine, the seat of the Roman government, and the resort of ten thousand Jews from all quarters, on their way to the great festivals at Jerusalem. A body of Roman soldiers were always present in this important military station, and would be replaced from time to time by new arrivals from Italy, while the former residents would often return home to the West. Cornelius himself was a centurion of "the Italian band." After him the next Gentile convert, whose name is on record, is Sergius Paulus, the Roman deputy of Cyprus, whose conversion could not be without fruit among his countrymen in that island. Men of Cyprus, a little earlier, took the foremost part in spreading the gospel among the Gentiles; and flourishing churches, with members from among the heathen, would be early formed in that province. The Evangelist himself had a Jewish name, but a Roman surname, which makes it probable that he might be a Roman citizen. We are told that there were present, even on the day of Pentecost *ἐπιδημοῦντες Ῥωμαῖοι*, or Roman Jews, who from time to time visited or abode in Jerusalem, and some of whom were probably among the converts of that eventful day. The sister of Barnabas, and mother of Mark, whose house was in Jerusalem, might have been married to one of these Roman Jews, and her son have consequently received a Roman surname. In this case he would

form a link of natural connexion between the Jewish believers, and the first class of Gentile and Roman converts.

During the period, A.D. 46—50, from the time when St. Mark returned to Jerusalem, till the visit of Peter to Antioch, he would probably be in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and in frequent intercourse with that Apostle. When eight or nine years had elapsed from the conversion of Cornelius, and four or five from that of Sergius Paulus, a large class of converts would most probably have been formed, among the military and civil residents in Cæsarea and Cyprus. All the notices of the Roman soldiery in the New Testament imply a peculiar openness to impressions from the faith of Christ. One centurion in the gospels received a striking testimony of his faith, and another exclaimed at the Crucifixion, "Truly this was the Son of God." Philip the Evangelist resided at Cæsarea, and would doubtless be occupied in spreading the faith zealously among the Roman as well as the Jewish residents. Many converts of this class, from time to time, would be leaving Palestine, and returning to Italy. The value of a record of our Saviour's life, adapted to their knowledge and habits of thought, would thus be felt very early. A gospel designed for their use would be brief, that it might be the more portable, and a record of actions, rather than words, as more adapted to the Roman character. It would assume a moderate knowledge of Palestine and of the customs of the Jews, such as Gentile residents in Palestine would naturally acquire, but not the more intimate and full knowledge possessed by Jews themselves. It would probably assume a personal knowledge, on the part of its readers, of several leading characters in the Jewish church at the time of its composition. It would be sparing in appeals to the prophets, since these would not be familiar to the Gentile converts. Its chief character would be a vivid exhibition, with historical accuracy and fulness, of those works of power, by which Jesus proved his Divine authority, and of his sufferings and resurrection, on which the whole message of the gospel was founded. All these features are conspicuous in St. Mark's

gospel, and confirm the conclusion that it was written during this interval, in the transition stage of the church's history.

VII. On the view here maintained, the usual tradition that this gospel was published at Rome, will admit of an easy explanation. If it were really written at Cæsarea, or for the Roman converts in that place, about A.D. 48, it would probably be soon carried to Rome by some of the converts of rank and education, like Cornelius and Sergius Paulus, within two or three years from its first appearance. The Roman soldiery of Cæsarea must have been constantly returning to Italy, either in charge of prisoners, as the centurion Julius, or from other calls of public duty. Hence this gospel would be not unlikely to circulate at Rome for several years, before either the first or third gospel had reached Italy. And since it would doubtless be known, by those who copied it, under whose direction, or from whose information it was composed, the natural result would be the growth of a tradition, that it was written by St. Mark during a visit of St. Peter, in the city of Rome, especially since there are a few Latinisms not found in the other gospels.

The last verse implies that the gospel had been spread widely by the preaching of the Apostles, when the work was published. In the year A.D. 48, there were churches in Judea, Galilee, Samaria, Damascus, Syria, Cilicia, Cyprus, Pisidia, Pamphylia, Lycaonia, probably in Abyssinia, Egypt, Cyrene, Mesopotamia, and doubtless in other places, of which no distinct mention is made in the brief and condensed narrative of St. Luke. There is nothing, then, in these words, which compels us to assign a later origin to the second gospel.

Again, the passage Mark xi. 13, has been thought to imply that it was written in Italy, where the seasons of Palestine would be very imperfectly known, or else it would be clear that the time of figs was later than the Passover. But this construction of the words appears to be groundless. In the first place, the Passover is not mentioned till three chapters later, so that a passing mention of this kind would not be out of place, even for those

who knew the seasons. And next, the words seem to refer to that particular tree only, and not to be a general statement, or else the search on the part of our Lord becomes unnatural. There were three times of figs in the year, and some trees, from their aspect &c. would certainly be earlier or later than others. This fig-tree, as may be inferred from the curse, was not inherently barren. One time of figs was past, another was not come, and meanwhile its appearance was deceptive, having leaves without any fruit. All this made it a fit emblem of the past, the future, and the actual state of the Jewish people.

It remains now to adduce some further reasons for the opinion, first, that the writer was John Mark, and not some unknown companion of Peter, or a Gentile soldier; and next, that the gospel was written before the council, about A.D. 48, with especial reference to Roman converts at Cæsarea, and in the neighbourhood of Palestine.

VIII. When the book of Acts was written, St. Luke had been the companion of St. Paul during his first imprisonment. Mark, the nephew of Barnabas, had been present at the same time, and is honourably mentioned by the Apostle in two Epistles, along with Luke himself. In the history, Luke appears to have speedily succeeded Mark, as a companion of the Apostle. In the last Epistle, just before St. Paul's death, Luke is already with him, and Mark is sent for with a special commendation of his worth. This fourfold association of Mark with Luke is natural and most significant, if these were the only two companions of the Apostles, who were honoured to be authors of a written gospel.

IX. The first gospel of St. Matthew has clear marks that it was specially intended for Jewish converts; the third, of St. Luke, has indications equally clear, that it was addressed mainly to Gentiles. The second gospel of St. Mark, as its order implies, has a middle character. In its choice of particulars it adheres to St. Matthew, in its orderly arrangement it agrees with St. Luke. Its notes of geography imply a special adaptation to readers in Palestine, while the passage chap. vii. shews a partial

exposition of Jewish rites for Gentile readers. This transitional character is doubly fulfilled in the name and history of John Mark. His name is Jewish, but he has a Roman surname, which gradually supersedes it. He is linked, first with St. Peter, the Apostle of the circumcision, then with Paul and Barnabas in the first Gentile circuit, then with Peter, with Barnabas, with Peter, and lastly with Paul again. His history is one of transition, and thus answers closely to the peculiar character of the second gospel.

X. The partial cloud, which seems to rest on John Mark in the Book of Acts, may be thought a reason for denying him to be the writer of the gospel. But a closer inquiry will turn this objection into a presumption for the identity. The Evangelist, it appears alike from his work, and from uniform tradition, was the companion of St. Peter, and his son in the faith. But St. Peter himself, with all his zeal and strong faith, repeatedly failed with reference to the call of the Gentiles. When the vision was given him, his answer shewed the strength of his early Jewish associations—"Not so, Lord, for I have never tasted any thing common or unclean." Again, when he came to Antioch, soon after the council, "he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them of the circumcision." Now the failure of John Mark merely exhibits the same tendency, in a mitigated form. He did not keep pace with the glowing zeal, and ever onward progress of the Apostle of the Gentiles; and returned to Jerusalem, to strengthen existing churches, instead of carrying the gospel on to the idolatrous heathen of Pisidia and Pamphylia. Even Barnabas, with all his love to his nephew, seems to have owned in practice the force of Paul's objection, since he sailed to Cyprus, where Mark had really accompanied them on the former journey. The fault of Mark seems thus to have been, a backwardness to apprehend the special glory of the gospel, as a message of grace to the Gentiles, and a preference for the less arduous work of building up the churches already formed. Yet the Apostle, at a later period, commends him as

one of the few teachers of the circumcision, who had been a comfort to him at Rome. This spiritual analogy between John Mark and the Apostle Peter, in their main temptation, and their final victory, tends rather to confirm the usual view, that the former was the author of the second gospel.

XI. The associations of John Mark, if only we are allowed to conjecture from his surname that his father was a Roman Jew, and that he was early acquainted with many Roman residents of Jerusalem and Cæsarea, will agree perfectly with all the features of the gospel. The Jewish character is in some respects more prominent than even in St. Matthew, as in the mention of Abiathar the high-priest ii. 26, the name, Boanerges iii. 17, the words, Talitha Cumi v. 41, the mention of Bethsaida, Gennesaret and Dalmanutha vi. 45, 53—viii. 10, the words, Corban and Ephphatha vii. 11, 34, the mention of Bartimæus, the son of Timæus x. 46, the house of Simon the leper xiv. 3, the Syriac word, Abba xiv. 36, and the mention of the Preparation xiii. 42.

It has been inferred, indeed, from vii. 3, that the writer was a Gentile. But a comparison of the gospels will prove that there is no ground for this conclusion, since this mention of the Jews occurs only twice in St. Luke, and more than twenty times in St. John's gospel. Or if stress be laid on the combination "all the Jews," it occurs elsewhere only in the speech of St. Paul, a Jew, when addressing an audience of Gentiles. It therefore agrees best with the supposition that St. Mark was a Jew, who was addressing himself in this passage to Gentile readers.

Again, the distinctive Latinisms of this gospel, *κεντυρίων*, *σπεκουλάτωρ*, *σύσσημον*, *ἀλλη*, ὃ ἐστὶ πραιτώριον, and *δύο λεπτά*, ὃ ἐστὶ κοδράντης, all suit with the idea that St. Mark was a Roman Jew, addressing himself to converts from among the Roman military, like Cornelius and his household, and cannot reasonably be held to prove that he was himself either a Gentile, or a soldier. It may be observed, also, that the allusions to the Apostles and the women, in this gospel, imply an early and

familiar acquaintance, and have not at all the air we should expect in a recent convert from among the Gentiles. But the home of John Mark was at Jerusalem, and he would clearly be familiar with most of the disciples, whose names appear in this work, with Mary the mother of James, Mary Magdalene and Salome, and probably with Bartimeus and Joseph of Arimathea.

XII. The mention of the women serves, perhaps, to throw light on the date of the gospel. "There were women looking on, among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome." In St. Matthew we read—"Among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children." Again we read in St. Mark, "And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where he was laid." It seems probable, from the slight change, that Zebedee was known to the first Evangelist, but not to the second; and that Salome was alive, or but lately dead, when the second gospel was written. The mother of James and John must have been nearly fifty, during our Lord's lifetime, and hence it seems likely that the gospel was composed within twenty years of the Crucifixion. The name, James the less, to distinguish the son of Alpheus from the son of Zebedee, implies also a date not long after the elder James had suffered martyrdom, and while both the Apostles of that name were alike prominent in the minds of Christians. The same reason accounts for the title "the mother of Joses" in the other verse. In choosing the briefest description, the writer mentions the son whose name would have no ambiguity, since "the mother of James" without some addition, would confound her with Salome, the mother of the elder James, and of John his brother.

XIII. The mention of Joseph of Arimathea, in the four gospels, has an instructive difference. "There came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph," Matt. xxvii. 57. "Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, who also waited for the

kingdom of God," Mark xv. 43. "And behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor, a good man and just; he was of Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who also himself waited for the kingdom of God," Luke xxiii. 50, 51. "And after this, Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews," &c. John xix. 30.

Here St. Mark and St. John allude to the person and place, as equally well known. St. Matthew assumes the place to be known, but not the person, and St. Luke implies that both alike might be unknown to his readers. The form in St. Matthew may perhaps be explained by the secret and constant reference to the prophecies. He therefore mentions first his character, "a rich man," by which the words of Isaiah were fulfilled, and adds his name, as of secondary importance, to be merely a pledge of historical accuracy. St. Luke evidently wrote for persons, who were not familiar with the person of Joseph, or with the minute geography of Judea. The language of St. Mark, like that of St. John, implies a familiar knowledge of the town, Arimathea, and some personal acquaintance with Joseph himself. And clearly one of the honourable counsellors, who had become so early a disciple of Jesus, must have been known to John Mark, whose home had been for many years in the heart of Jerusalem.

XIV. We are told, in this gospel, that Simon the Cyrenian was coming "out of the country" when he was compelled to bear the cross, and that the two disciples were "going into the country," when Jesus appeared to them. The phrase occurs elsewhere once in St. Luke only, where it seems merely borrowed from St. Mark (xxiii. 26). Such a phrase, for the vicinity of Jerusalem, agrees well with the fact that John Mark had his home in that city, not far from the prison of Herod. In St. Matthew, who was a Galilean, the expression is not found.

XV. The mention of blind Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, x. 46, and of Simon the leper, xiv. 3, would naturally lead us to think that they were both alive, and known to the writer. At a

distance of eighteen years from the Crucifixion, this would be very probable, but this probability is greatly diminished, if the gospel be assigned to a much later period.

All these indications agree with the view that the second gospel was written by John Mark, about the year A.D. 48, and probably at Cæsarea, with a reference, not only to Jewish believers, but to Gentile Roman converts, who would have multiplied there in seven or eight years from the conversion of Cornelius. The mother of James, and Salome, Joseph of Arimathea, Bartimeus, and Simon the leper, might all of them be then alive, or their memory fresh and recent in the minds of the Christians of Palestine. The Roman surname of St. Mark, his home at Jerusalem, and return thither, and his later eminent labours at Rome itself, make it likely that Cæsarea, the military station of the Romans, would be a main theatre of his ministry at this time. His gospel, if written in A.D. 48, or 49, would be probably known to St. Luke at Antioch, after the visit of Peter and Mark, which followed the council, a little before the circuit of Paul and Silas began. In harmony with this view, we find St. Paul, with his dying breath, associate him honourably with his brother Evangelist, as one of his choicest helpers. "Only Luke is with me. Take Mark and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry."

An objection to this view may perhaps be raised, from the passage Acts xv. 38, where St. Paul, after the council, refuses John Mark for his companion, in a second missionary journey. Is it likely that one, thus rejected by the Apostle, should have been selected by the Spirit of God, shortly before, to be the writer of a gospel, in which the main and prominent feature is the laborious and persevering diligence of our Saviour's ministry?

This difficulty has already been examined, and partly removed. St. Peter, whose interpreter Mark is often said to be, with all his excellences and endowments, was yet guilty of one serious inconsistency, nearly at the same time with the dispute of Paul

and Barnabas, and his fault brought upon him a grave and public rebuke from his brother Apostle, not long before his refusal of Mark for his partner in the journey. If that error of St. Peter was compatible with his high calling, as one of the very chief Apostles, the fault of John Mark must be equally compatible with his lower, yet important privilege, as the least conspicuous of the four Evangelists. The source of the error, in both cases, was evidently the same. St. Mark, a Jew of Jerusalem, like St. Peter, his father in the faith, was too slow in apprehending the full extent of the duties imposed on Christians by the new development of gospel liberty, in the call of the Gentiles. As Peter dissembled at Antioch, when the Christian Pharisees came down from James, and shrank from the consistent uniformity of his former intercourse with the Gentiles, so also St. Mark seems to have shrunk from the course of rapid extension, which the gospel was receiving among heathen idolaters by St. Paul's energy, and preferred the less adventurous work of building up the converts in Palestine. The free standing of the Gentile converts had not yet been publicly ratified by a solemn council, and St. Mark seems to have had the willingness for patient labour, without the prompt discernment of the higher lessons of Providence, and of the new era which was opening on the Church of Christ. When once the principle of Gentile liberty had been confirmed, there is no trace to be seen of any slackness in his zeal. He is willing to go with Paul and Barnabas, and when rejected by the former, with Barnabas alone. Some time, perhaps not long afterward, St. Paul gives a charge to the Phrygian and other churches to receive him, as being already satisfied of his zeal and fidelity. Still later, he is found with St. Peter in the east, as one of his most loved and honoured helpers; and still later again, with St. Paul at Rome, in the crisis of his imprisonment; who mentions him, along with two others, as the only Jewish teachers, who had been a signal help and comfort to him in his ministry. So deep was the impression made on the Apostle by his conduct and diligence, that in his last imprisonment, a few months before his death,

when only Luke was present with him, he is not content with sending for his beloved son, Timothy, but requires him to bring Mark also along with him, because he found such help and comfort in his services and labours. The defect in St. Mark, while it lasted, like the similar fault of St. Peter, under whose eye he wrote, was not such as to disqualify him from great immediate usefulness, or from the task of recording faithfully the teaching and labours of the Lord Jesus. It shewed, at the most, some deficiency in those wider sympathies with humanity at large, which characterize St. Luke's writings, or in that clearness and elevation of spiritual vision, with regard to the highest mysteries of providence and grace, which mark the beloved disciple, that leaned once on the bosom of the Lord.

On the other hand, there are several features in the history of John Mark, which would eminently qualify him for the task he was selected to fulfil. He must have been very intimate with St. Peter, who calls first at his house, when released from prison by the angel, and who styles him afterwards his son in the faith. He was not less intimate with Barnabas, his own uncle, the most distinguished of all the converts added to the church, after the day of Pentecost, and before the call of the Gentiles. It is possible that he might be one of the brethren, who accompanied Peter on his visit to Cornelius, and almost certain that he was present in Jerusalem, when St. Peter gave in his report to the church. He had already, at the date to which the gospel has just been referred, accompanied the Apostle of the Gentiles on the outset of his first journey, and was to be presently associated, in succession, with Barnabas, with Peter, and with Paul again. He would thus occupy precisely a middle position, in his early connexion with the church, and in his mixed associations, as a Jew by birth, and a Roman by character, implied in his surname, between the first Evangelist, who was one of the twelve Apostles, and the third, who has been shewn to be a Gentile proselyte of the great Gentile city, Antioch. There would thus be a provision made, even in the choice of the writers, as well as in

the time when each of them wrote, for the gradual development of Christian doctrine, and the transition from the summing up of all ancient Jewish prophecy, in the king of Israel, to the fuller and wider view of our Lord's character and work, as the son of the first Adam, who was himself the second Adam, the friend of sinners, and Redeemer of mankind.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE DATE AND AUTHENTICITY OF ST. MATTHEW'S GOSPEL.

FROM the order of the gospels, determined by their mutual relations to each other, and the dates already assigned to those of St. Mark and St. Luke, it will naturally follow that the first gospel was written earlier than A.D. 48, and probably during the first of the three periods in the church's history, contained in the Book of Acts, or before the death of Herod Agrippa.

It is not likely that a written gospel would appear within six or seven years from the Ascension, while the Apostles were all present in Jerusalem, and busied in the direct work of oral instruction, and at a time when nearly all the converts in Judea and Galilee might have a direct and personal knowledge of our Lord's ministry. But these reasons would no longer apply, when the first era of the church was drawing to a close. At the death of Herod, fourteen years would have passed since the Ascension, and eighteen from the opening of John's ministry. One half of the converts might have been only children, when Jesus was on earth ; so that a narrative of his discourses for their use would become desirable, and when the Apostles were scattered by persecution, almost necessary. The words of Peter, on his release from prison, xii. 17, seem to imply that no Apostle but James was then in Jerusalem. There is an early tradition that our Lord charged his Apostles to stay at Jerusalem twelve years, and then to go forth to the heathen, and such an idea

agrees well with the tenor of St. Luke's history. The Apostles were still in Judea after the conversion of Cornelius, A.D. 41, but three years later, at the visit of Barnabas and Saul, only James the Lord's brother, beside Peter, seems to have remained. If the conversion of Cornelius, and the call of the Gentiles, were viewed by them as the preparation for entering on a wider sphere, this would form a new motive for recording the discourses and miracles of Jesus, both for the use of the converts in Palestine, and for a testimony to the unbelieving Jews. Hence the year A.D. 42 may be viewed with reason as a near approach to the date of this first gospel. Let us examine the external and internal evidence, which either opposes or favours this conclusion.

There are several authorities, which agree in assigning the gospel an early date. Cosmas of Alexandria places it in the persecution, which followed the death of Stephen; Isidore, in the reign of Caligula, which ended A.D. 41, and Theophylact and Euthymius, in the eighth year from the Ascension. All these are a little earlier than the date proposed above. But Irenæus seems to place this gospel much later, and his authority has led many modern critics, as Lardner, Mill, and Michaelis, to the same view. His words are as follows.

“Now Matthew, among the Hebrews, published also a written gospel, while Peter and Paul were preaching the gospel at Rome, and founding the church there. But after their departure, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, also delivered to us in writing what was preached by Peter, and Luke, the follower of Paul, recorded in a book the gospel preached by him. Afterwards John, the disciple of the Lord, the same who leaned on his breast, set forth a gospel, residing at Ephesus in Asia.”

Here it is plain that Irenæus dates the second and third gospels after the death of the two Apostles; a view inconsistent with the fact, that St. Paul quotes the gospel of St. Luke in his own lifetime, while the Book of Acts was evidently composed before his last journey and final imprisonment. The remark that St. Matthew wrote in Palestine, while St. Peter and St.

Paul were preaching at Rome, has the air of a loose antithesis, rather than of an exact definition of time. If Irenæus is wrong, where he speaks with precision, very little weight can be reasonably given to his more indefinite statement with regard to St. Matthew's gospel. The general impression of early writers, that it was first written in Hebrew, is a presumption of at least equal force in favour of a higher date, and we are thus thrown upon the internal evidence, to fix the time of its composition.

I. The mention of John the Baptist is a first presumption for its early origin. He is introduced abruptly as follows.

iii. 1. "In those days cometh John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For he it is that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, &c."

iv. 12. "Now when Jesus had heard that John was delivered up, he departed into Galilee."

xi. 2. "Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Jesus, he sent two of his disciples, &c."

Here the person of John, and the fact of his imprisonment by Herod, are assumed to be well known, and familiar to the reader. This brief mention is quite natural, if his public appearance was only sixteen years before the date of the gospel. The general facts of his appearance, preaching, and sudden imprisonment, would be known to every reader in Palestine. But if the gospel were written forty years after that imprisonment, the facts would surely have been stated in a more distinct and historical form, as we find them given in the gospel of St. Luke. The abrupt introduction is more striking in the case of the imprisonment, and would be quite natural, if the work were published only three or four years after Herod was deposed.

II. The three other gospels, in their account of the crucifixion, constantly use the name of Pilate, and never his title of office. St. Matthew uses the title, Governor, and the name, Pilate, with equal frequency, since each of them occurs nine times. Now Pilate held the office ten years, and after his

removal, A.D. 36, no successor with the same title was appointed, until Cuspius Fadus, after the death of Agrippa A.D. 44, when three governors succeeded within five years. The use of the name and the office, as equivalent and convertible, would thus be natural, not only till the deposition of Pilate, but until Agrippa's death. But when Fadus, Tiberius Alexander, Cumanus, and Felix, one or more of them, had held the same office, the use of the title, governor, as equivalent to the name of Pilate, would naturally cease. It might still be employed once or twice, for variety, or where the mention of his rank was emphatic, but the usage which marks the first gospel could hardly have survived the new appointments.

This argument is confirmed by comparing Matt. xxviii. 15, and Mark xv. 6. "At that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would." "Now at that feast he was wont to release them a prisoner, whomsoever they desired. And the multitude, crying aloud, began to desire that he would do as he had ever done to them." The word, *governor*, in the former gospel, is plainly equivalent to the name, Pilate, in the second. If a governor were ruling Judea, when Matthew wrote, and the custom still continued, the present tense would naturally be used. If there were another governor, and the custom was obsolete, it would be natural either to speak of Pilate by name, or to use an adverb of time. "At that feast Pilate was wont," or "the governor was then wont," &c. As the passage now stands, it is a strong presumption that the gospel was written before another governor had succeeded to Pilate's office, or before the middle of A.D. 44, the limit already assigned for an entirely different reason. During Herod Agrippa's reign, the title, governor, and the name, Pilate, would still be strictly equivalent to Jewish ears.

III. There are two passages, which have been adduced in proof of a later date; where it is said of the potter's field, "That field is called the field of blood unto this day," and again of the soldiers' report, "This saying is commonly reported

among the Jews unto this day." But an interval of twelve years is really enough to account for each of these expressions.

First, in the case of Judas. The same field is clearly meant, Acts i. 18, 19, for it is incredible that two different fields, at the very same time, should have the same new title imposed, close to Jerusalem. It was actually bought by the priests after the death of Judas, being the same in which he had committed suicide, and was called *Aceldama* in the dialect of Jerusalem, but *ἄγρος αἱματος* by Matthew, and *χωρίον αἱματος* by St. Luke. Now if such a singular name, occasioned by the awful end of Judas, had continued in use for twelve years, and was current daily among the Jews themselves when St. Matthew wrote, it would be quite natural for him to mention the fact, just as he has done. "Wherefore that field has been called the field of blood, unto this day." There is certainly nothing in the phrase which requires a longer interval than ten or twelve years. In the Book of Acts this addition is not found, so that it is quite uncertain whether the name were still in use, when St. Luke wrote his second work. If it were still in use, the difference may be explained by the different place where the two works were written. St. Matthew alone wrote in or near Jerusalem, so that it would be more natural for him to mention that the name was still in current use in that city.

A similar remark will apply to the other passage. "Palpable lies," as Dr. Townson observes, "and new names of places, which have had others from ancient usage, are things of such a perishable nature, that even a single year might give propriety to the observation. It was memorable that the name had fastened on the field, and strange that the lie had lasted so long."

But the passage, when examined further, will even furnish evidence in favour of the earlier date, proposed above. The whole circumstance, of the watch at the sepulchre, with the consultation of the Sanhedrim, the bribery of the soldiers, and the report still current among the Jews, is mentioned in this gospel alone. Now it is plain that, beside the direct evidence of

the Apostles to the fact of the resurrection, from the repeated appearances of their Lord, there was a further evidence in the setting of the watch, and the disappearance of the body, with a counter-evidence in the report of the guards, if the secret cause of it were unknown. This evidence and counter-evidence would be limited to the vicinity of Jerusalem, and would have less and less weight, as the minute particulars became less notorious, or after the lapse of many years, while the direct and simple testimony of the disciples would continue unaffected by these limitations of place and time. And hence the fact that this gospel alone records the watch, and the report spread among the Jews, implies naturally that it was written earlier than the others, when the fact of the watch being set was most likely to confirm the evidence of the resurrection, from being familiarly known ; and when the counter-explanation, being also well known, would stand most in need of refutation by a simple, unadorned statement, of the events themselves. The whole passage bears the traces of a period, when the historical fact of the resurrection was still the prominent subject of contention, and when the tide of Jewish opposition had not begun to spend its main force on another topic, the transfer of their exclusive privileges to the Gentiles. As to the internal incongruities of the account, alleged by Strauss and other neologian critics, they have no real existence, and are based on a gross misconception of a very clear and simple statement.

IV. The following verse, Matt. xxviii. 16, presents another mark of an early date, very easily overlooked, but not the less convincing, when fairly weighed. From its delicacy it is entirely lost in the received translation. The words are these, when rendered accurately. "Then went away the eleven disciples into Galilee, into the mountain where Jesus made appointment with them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him ; but some doubted. And Jesus came near and spake to them, saying, All power is given to me in heaven and earth."

Here the Evangelist alludes to the circumstance, as already

known, that Jesus had appointed for his disciples to meet him in some particular mountain of Galilee. No mention of this appointment occurs elsewhere, either in this gospel, or in the others. But we learn from 1 Cor. xv. 5, that he appeared, no doubt in Galilee, to above five hundred brethren at once; and this appearance, as being the most public and notorious, is doubtless the one which St. Matthew here records. It is equally clear that so large a number could not have been gathered together for such a purpose, without a previous appointment, and that such an appointment could be made only by our Lord himself. Since most of these brethren were alive twenty-seven years later, when St. Paul wrote, it is clear that this appearance must have been the most prominent in the faith and memory of the Jewish believers. Hence the exclusive reference to it in St. Matthew's gospel. But his allusion to our Lord's appointment of the place, as a fact already known, shews that he viewed his narrative as a supplementary statement, and that many circumstances, from personal knowledge, or the oral communication of the Apostles, were still fresh in the minds of his readers. Twelve years after the Ascension, he might reasonably assume that most converts in Palestine were aware of the specific appointment of our Lord, and of the spot where it was fulfilled, since four hundred living eye-witnesses were dispersed in every part of the land. But at the distance of thirty years, the same assumption would be out of place; and, accordingly, no trace of it appears in any of the other gospels. A similar explanation applies to the words that follow; "but some doubted." It seems clear, from the statement of St. Paul, that five hundred disciples were present, besides the eleven, and to these St. Matthew probably refers.

V. The use of the word, *gospel*, as Dr. Townson has remarked, is a sign of the earlier date of St. Matthew's narrative. It is there used only four times, thrice in the complex phrase, the *gospel of the kingdom*, and once in the words respecting Mary, and her anointing:—"Whosoever this gospel shall be preached

in the whole world." Hence it has clearly not assumed its technical sense, but denotes simply, *the glad tidings*, or *these glad tidings*. In St. Mark, however, it occurs eight times, and in six cases in its abstract form, Mark i. 15 ; viii. 35 ; x. 29 ; xiii. 10 ; xiv. 9 ; xvi. 15. It is plain that, when this Evangelist wrote, the secondary meaning was becoming established, in which it is a synonym for the Christian revelation.

It is true that the entire absence of the word in St. Luke may seem, at first, to oppose this conclusion. But this contrast may easily be explained, since he uses the verb, *ευαγγελίζομαι* ten times in the gospel, and fifteen times in the book of Acts, which is never used by St. Mark or St. John, and only once in St. Matthew. This merely proves that St. Luke, writing for Gentile converts, avoided a technical term, and preferred a more classical equivalent, and does not prove that the technical use of the word had not then begun. In fact, it occurs twice in the book of Acts, and eight times in the Epistles to Thessalonica, which must have been as early, or almost as early, as the third gospel. And hence the conclusion remains undisturbed, that the term had acquired its more limited acceptance when St. Mark's gospel was written, but had scarcely begun to receive it when the other and earlier gospel was composed.

VI. In the phrases used to describe the Apostles, St. Matthew's gospel gives another sign of its early date. They are called, in chapter x. *the twelve disciples*, *the twelve apostles*, and *these twelve* ; and afterwards they are twice named *the twelve disciples* ; three times in chapter xxvi., *the twelve* ; once *the eleven disciples*, and nearly sixty times, without further addition, *the disciples*. In St. Mark, the expression, *the twelve*, is used nine times, the title, *Apostles*, once, and the term, *disciples*, about forty times. In St. Luke, *the twelve* is used five times, *the twelve disciples*, and *the twelve apostles*, once, and *the apostles*, five times ; while in the book of Acts, *the twelve* is used once, and the word, *apostles*, thirty times. Hence it appears that, in all the history, before the last supper, the brief

expression, *the twelve*, is used five times by St. Mark, and three times by St. Luke, and never by St. Matthew; while the term, *apostles*, without addition, is used once by St. Mark, five times by St. Luke in the gospel, thirty times in the Acts, and never once by St. Matthew. Now this clearly indicates, not only that St. Matthew's gospel was the earliest written, but that it was composed when the new term, *apostles*, had not yet displaced the earlier description of the twelve disciples, and when the abbreviation, *the twelve*, was itself hardly established as the most familiar and usual term. Such a feature, though minute, is entirely opposed to the date of some critics, thirty years and more after the crucifixion, and agrees well with the time of its composition which is here maintained, about twelve years after the close of the gospel history. Even this interval might appear too long for the usage to be thus undetermined, if we did not remember that a writer, who was himself an apostle, both from habit and from modesty, would adhere more generally than another to the original expression.

VII. The titles of honour, applied to Jerusalem in this gospel alone, are not only a sign that it was written for Jewish readers, but the probable indication of an early date. Twice it is called "the holy city," once, "the city of the great King," and once its vicinity is called, "the holy place," in the report of our Lord's prophecy. This last instance is the more remarkable, since it disappears in the account of the same discourse, both in St. Mark and St. Luke. So long as the parting charge of our Lord, "beginning at Jerusalem," was still in force, the feeling of its sanctity would be rather increased than diminished by the new revelation, of which it was still the chosen theatre. But when the slaughter of prophets and apostles had begun, and the gospel was spreading its blessed influence to other cities, in a higher measure, it was natural that Jerusalem should more and more decline in the estimation of believers; or to speak more correctly, that its sin rather than its sanctity should be noted by the Spirit of God. Hence the contrast between the first gospel

and the two others agrees with the view, that the persecution of Herod Agrippa, the martyrdom of James, the miraculous escape of Peter, and the dispersion of the other Apostles, had intervened between the earlier and the two later narratives.

VIII. The mention of the sons of Zebedee is a further sign that this gospel was written early. The foot-note will shew the relative frequency of the different names in the three gospels, and the book of Acts.*

There is here an evident progression. Zebedee, and his eldest son, James, are most prominent in the first gospel, the two brothers, especially James, in the second, but in the third gospel, and still more in the book of Acts, John has precedence of his brother. This greater prominence of James, in the second gospel, tends to confirm the proposed date, about four years only after his death; while the more frequent mention of his brother, not only in the book of Acts, but in the gospel of St. Luke, is quite natural in a writer who lived and wrote at Antioch, after the first council, in which Peter, and John and James the less, were the recognized pillars of the church, and seven years after the martyrdom of the elder brother.

Again, the frequent mention of Zebedee, in the first gospel, agrees well with a date only twelve years after the Ascension, or fifteen from the call of his two sons, when he was still alive. On the other hand, it would be unnatural more than thirty years after his death, when the Apostle John had been so long prominent as one of the main pillars of the Church of Christ. At such a date the proportion is natural, which we find in St. Luke's gospel, or in the book of Acts, but not the other. Why, indeed, should the father be named so often, and the sons and the

* Zebedee,	6	4	1	0
Sons of Zebedee, ...	3	8	8	0
James,	6	14	5	2
John,	3	10	7	9
James and John, ...	3	9	4	1
John and James, ...	0	0	1	0

mother described so often by their relation to him, if Zebedee were not better known to many of the first readers of the gospel than the Apostles themselves? After the death of James, new habits of thought would soon arise, the sons be more notorious than their father Zebedee, and John more prominent in the minds of Christians than his elder brother.

IX. The lists of the Apostles furnish another sign that St. Matthew wrote very early. In his gospel, and that of St. Mark, Simon is styled the Cananite, but in the third gospel and Acts, Zelotes, the Greek version of the same title. As Peter replaced Cephas, so Zelotes would probably replace 'Cananites,' as the more usual appellative, and especially with the Greek converts out of Palestine. The brother of James, in Matthew, is Lebbeus, sur-named Thaddeus: in Mark, Thaddeus; but in St. Luke, Judas, the brother of James, and in St. John, Judas not Iscariot. From this last mention of him, and from his own Epistle, it is clear that the name Judas came later into common use, and continued to the close of the century. Since Judas is not a Greek, but a Jewish name, this is a clearer proof than the last, that St. Luke wrote after the two other Evangelists. While Iscariot lived, there would be a motive for calling this Apostle by some other name, and the fact that Judas Barsabas was an eminent prophet of the mother church, might perhaps prolong this usage. When St. Mark wrote, the name Lebbeus appears almost lost in the sur-name, Thaddeus; when St. Luke wrote, both had been replaced by the name Judas. Hence the earlier we place St. Matthew's gospel, the fuller will be the explanation of this difference. The name Lebbeus probably began to be disused after the death of Judas, and seems quite extinct, when the book of Acts and St. Jude's Epistle were written.

X. The passage xxvi. 6. compared with xxvii. 32, seems to imply an early date. Simon the leper, and his house, are introduced as already well known. On the other hand, Simon the Cyrenian is described as a stranger. This Cyrenian Jew would be a foreigner in Jerusalem, and therefore be less likely to be

known to readers in Palestine. But Simon the leper might very probably be still living at the house in Bethany, at the distance of twelve years from the Crucifixion. After thirty, or thirty-five years, it is most likely that he would be dead, and his person unknown to nine-tenths of the Jewish Christians.

XI. The partial irregularity which has been shewn to exist in the first gospel, is some guide to its probable date. An eyewitness, writing soon after the events, would have to select out of a very large number of incidents or discourses; and his account would therefore seem, to his own mind, less rigidly bound by the laws of continuous narrative. He would think it more important to give prominence to some leading features in our Lord's ministry, than to adhere to the order of time, when the events he has to relate were few, compared with many others, which he passed by in silence. This special purpose, however, would soon cease, and the instincts of simple narrative would resume their full influence, and dictate an adherence, wherever it was known, to the actual succession in which the incidents occurred.

Now the irregular portion of St. Matthew has features, which agree thoroughly with this supposition. First, in the Sermon on the Mount, it exhibits at considerable length the moral code of the Christian Church under the new revelation. Next, in the Commission of the Apostles, it reveals the law of its progress, and the provision made for its future development. Thirdly, in chapter xi. it exhibits its relations, retrospectively, to the law, the prophets, the baptism of John, and the unbelieving people of Israel. From this point the writer resumes the order of time, having now placed in the fore-front the main constituent elements of our Lord's ministry, and of the gospel dispensation. Such an arrangement would be more natural than a rigid adherence to the order of the incidents, in the first written history of our Lord; which would be a kind of manifesto to the whole nation of the Jews, and a manual of their faith to the first generation of Jewish converts. It is evident, through the whole course of the

gospel, that the exhibition of our Lord's doctrinal teaching is a more prominent aim of the writer, than the record of his miracles and journeys, the only exception being in the cardinal facts of the crucifixion and resurrection, on which all the higher doctrines of the faith would necessarily depend.

XII. There are several minute allusions in the gospel, which prove that the readers for whom it was designed were supposed, many of them, to be familiar with many local circumstances and incidents of our Lord's personal ministry. In chapter v. 1, we are told that "seeing the multitudes, he went up into the mountain," although no mountain has been specified before. If however, many of the readers were present, or knew of a particular mountain near to Capernaum, or if it were the same, where Jesus met the disciples after his resurrection, any of these suppositions would account for the phrase, while they all would alike employ an early date of the composition. In chapter viii. 18, we are told that he "gave commandment to depart unto the other side;" and again, verse 23, that "when he was entered into the ship, his disciples followed him." The former phrase implies that he wrote for readers acquainted with the situation of the sea of Tiberias, and the latter, that they were aware of the fact, mentioned by St. Mark, that a small ship or boat was retained for the special use of Jesus and his disciples. The same allusion recurs, chapter xiii. 1, and xiv. 22, and the mountain is mentioned once more, chapter xv. 29. The retirement into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi is not mentioned explicitly, as in St. Mark, nor omitted entirely, as in St. Luke, but stated incidentally. "And when Jesus was come into the coast of Cæsarea Philippi, he asked his disciples," &c. In the same manner the stay in Galilee, and the return to Capernaum, chapter xvii. 22, 24, which the gospel of St. Mark restores to the direct historical form. The same feature appears in the mention of the last journey, chapter xx. 17. "And Jesus, as he went up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples apart in the way." So in verse 29: "And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed

him." And in chapter xxi. 1 : "When they drew nigh to Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage to the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples." A comparison with St. Mark will make the contrast apparent, where the events are thus given. "And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee, and he would not have any man know it, for he taught his disciples," &c. "And he came to Capernaum, and being in the house, he asked them." "And they were on the way going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus went before them." "And they came to Jericho ; and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples," &c. "And when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives." The form is thus changed in each instance except the last, where the context has shewn the direction of the journey, and there Bethany is added, as if to make the account more perspicuous to a stranger.

This indirect mention of the events, in these journeys or local incidents, would be quite natural, if the gospel were written when most of the converts were personally aware of the general outline of our Lord's last journey ; and hence they confirm the opinion that it was written early, before the time of Herod's death.

XIII. The frequent quotations from the prophets, are a striking peculiarity of St. Matthew's gospel. The instances are very numerous, i. 22, 23 ; ii. 6, 15, 17 ; iii. 3 ; iv. 14—16 ; viii. 17 ; xi. 10 ; xii. 17, 18 ; xiii. 14, 35 ; xxi. 4—6, 13, 16 ; xxii. 44 ; xxvi. 31, 56 ; xxvii. 9, 10, 35, 43. Such a frequent appeal to the prophecies is most natural in a gospel addressed to the Jews, and written early in the course of the great controversy between the Church and the Synagogue. It appears equally in the first sermons in the book of Acts, and would be more frequent and impressive at an early period of the conflict. The quotations, afterwards, turned rather on another question, whether the Gentiles were to share freely in the blessings of the promised Messiah. But on this subject not one quotation appears in the first gospel ; they all relate to the personal history of the Lord Jesus. We may reasonably infer that it was written, while the controversy

with the Jews was confined mainly to the direct question of the Messiahship of Jesus, and when the admission of the Gentiles to share in the privileges of God's covenant, had scarcely become a prominent subject of contention and debate. And this would be the case, if the gospel were composed A.D. 42, or only one year after the conversion of Cornelius.

XIV. The mention of the Herodians, by St. Matthew and St. Mark, is another feature which may throw light on the time of their composition. The term is not found in Josephus, but no explanation of it is given. There has been, in consequence, a great diversity of judgment among modern critics as to its meaning. Some think they were a sodality in honour of Herod; others, his courtiers and soldiers, who paid tribute freely; others, a Jewish sect, who held Herod the Great to be the Messiah, others, a party who gave the same flattery to Herod Antipas; others, that they were the followers of Judas of Galilee, and others again, a sect who favoured Herod in his compliance with heathen usages. Others, finally, that they were a portion of the Sadducees in league with Herod.

Let us examine the four passages themselves, Matt. xxii. 16; Mark iii. 6; viii. 15; xii. 13, and compare them with the history of the times. In Mark viii. 15, where the disciples are told to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and the leaven of Herod, the tetrarch is clearly meant, who was then alive, and not Herod the Great, who had been dead thirty years. This Herod our Lord elsewhere calls a fox, from his crafty policy. His exile was caused by Caligula's strong suspicion, resting on weighty evidence, that he was preparing for a revolt from the Romans. If so, his interest would lead him to flatter the Pharisees, the popular leaders of the Jews, who seem from Luke xiii. 31, 32, to have been acquainted with some of his secret counsels. Accordingly the Herodians are always joined with the Pharisees, and in Matthew are plainly contrasted with the Sadducees. Two parties successively tempt Jesus, the Pharisees and the Herodians, then the Sadducees, and then the Pharisees alone. The second

time they propose a riddle of theology, just as before, a question of political duty. We may infer that the Herodians were political Pharisees, who cared less for the law of Moses than for national independence, and fixed their hopes on the tetrarch, as the most hopeful leader of revolt, being probably admitted to some knowledge of his secret designs. Hence the double warning of Jesus does not refer to Sadduceism, which was not the temptation of the disciples, but to Pharisaism religious and political. In one class, the heaven was self-righteous hypocrisy; in the other, the hypocrisy of outward submission and secret rebellion, in a proud aspiration after national independence.

It is now easy to explain why no mention of the Herodians should be found in Josephus, or even in the two later gospels. The exile of the tetrarch would crush their hopes, so far as they looked to him to be their leader in revolt. On the mad attempt of Caligula to place his statue in the temple, the conspiracy took new forms, with new provocations, sought for itself new leaders, and issued in a series of chronic and constant rebellions. The title would soon expire, since the disaffected, after Herod's exile, would seek to dissociate their cause from his name. And hence it would only be used, it seems likely, for a short period after that event, at least without some explanation of its meaning.

Now this confirms the proposed date of the first gospel, only three years after the voyage of Antipas to Rome, and his banishment by Caligula. The name would then be fresh in the minds of every Jewish reader, and continue intelligible in Palestine, even at the date of the second gospel, about six years later. But if we place them both, as Lardner and other critics have done, about A.D. 64, twenty-five years after Herod was banished, when the sect had long disappeared, and repeated revolts had occurred under other leaders, the name would assuredly have had some explanatory addition, as the Sadducees receive in all the three gospels. And this would be the more needful, because the name itself is so ambiguous, and might be derived from Herod the Great, Herod Antipas, or Herod Agrippa.

Thus all the delicate and minute indications, contained in the first gospel, conspire in the same result, and fix its composition shortly before the death of the third Herod. There is also, on this view of its date, just at the time, probably, of a first dispersion of the Apostles, and one or two years after the conversion of Cornelius, a beautiful agreement between the circumstances under which it was written, and that emphatic commission at its close, which they were about to fulfil. "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." A few years later, at the date assigned above to the second gospel, the notice of the actual fulfilment of this commission would have become a no less appropriate close of the gospel narrative. "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by signs following. Amen."

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE GREEK GOSPEL OF ST. MATTHEW.

FROM the internal evidence of the New Testament we have now arrived at the important conclusion, that the first of the four gospels was written about the year A.D. 42, or soon after the conversion of the Gentiles, and a little before the death of Herod Agrippa, and the martyrdom of James. It seems to follow at once that it is the genuine work of the Apostle whose name it bears, since no work of that early date could have become current under his name, unless it had been his own genuine writing.

This conclusion is further confirmed by some minute features of this gospel, which ratify and complete the evidence of its authority. These have been noticed, in a striking manner, by Da Costa, in his valuable work on the Gospel Harmony, and have been partly indicated in the *Horæ Apostolicæ*, and by various authors.

First, the list of the Apostles has a minute and expressive variation. The fourth pair, in St. Mark and St. Luke, are Matthew and Thomas, but, in the first gospel, they appear in the reverse order, and with the added epithet—"Thomas and Matthew *the publican*." This peculiarity, so characteristic of modesty, in St. Matthew himself, and so improbable in any other writer, is a sign that he is the real author.

Again, in this gospel alone, the publican called from the receipt of custom, an odious and despised occupation, is doubly identified,

by name and profession, with the Apostle St. Matthew. The two others, by mentioning his call under a different name, as "Levi, the son of Alpheus," have given no clue to this identity, which is thus revealed to us by the first gospel alone. Again, the first gospel omits all mention of the feast, and does not state that it was Matthew's own house, where Jesus sat at meat, when these striking words of mercy were uttered. The very manner in which the Apostle is introduced in his own gospel, as "a man, named Matthew," is another instance of the same modesty of tone, and a further token that Matthew himself was the writer of the first narrative.

These internal features, when combined with the early date already established by strong evidence, and with the constant voice of all antiquity, prove the authenticity of the first gospel. The closing words, and the fulness with which the commission of the Apostles is given, may be viewed as a further and concurrent signs that the writer was one of the Apostolic company.

A more difficult inquiry remains, with regard to the language in which the gospel was first written. Ancient authors, with general consent, affirm that St. Matthew wrote in Hebrew. Such is the statement of Papias, Irenæus, Origen, Eusebius, Jerome, Cyril, Athanasius, Epiphanius; and Chrysostom speaks of it more doubtfully as a usual tradition. Among modern critics, this has been maintained and denied with equal confidence, while several have held a middle hypothesis, that the Apostle himself wrote successively in both languages. Among those who maintain that his gospel was written in Hebrew, there have been various conjectures as to the translator. Some have held it to be St. Mark, others St. James or St. John, and Jerome frankly owns that it is quite uncertain. The consequence has been, that the Greek gospel has both its authenticity and its authority not a little obscured. It becomes important to examine the evidence anew on this debated question of historical criticism.

1. The first question must be, whether the external evidence

for a Hebrew original is clear and decisive. Mr. Greswell affirms that "no matter of fact, which rests upon the faith of testimony, can be considered certain, if this be not so." On the other hand, the editor of Diodati observes that "if the records of history, and reasonings of logic, have any value, the books of the New Testament, from Matthew to the Apocalypse, were certainly Greek in the Apostolic autographs. Tradition at third hand, is of little value, and it is obvious that that of Papias is nothing more than the shadow of a shade." The truth lies rather between these opposite statements. But it is clear that Papias does not profess to have seen this Hebrew original, nor does any one else, in later times, appear to have seen it, though Origen and Jerome were diligent Hebrew students; and it is certainly difficult to believe that an inspired book has entirely perished, and left no trace of itself, except a translation by an unknown hand.

The words of Papias, in Eusebius, are these: Ματθαῖος μὲν οὖν Εβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ τὰ λόγια συνεγράψατο· ἡρμήνευσε δὲ αὐτὰ ὡς ἡδυνάτο ἕκαστος. This is followed by the statement that St. Mark also wrote a gospel, but οὐ τάξει, or not in order of time. The latter statement Mr. Greswell himself rejects, and with good reason, as directly disproved by all the internal evidence. It is difficult, then, to attach much weight to the other assertion, unless there were internal evidence to confirm its truth. The very idea that the first written gospel was left in a dialect, known to a small minority of the Church, and that chance translations were the only resource of all the rest, is highly unnatural, and hard to reconcile with the wisdom of the Apostles. Of later writers, it is remarkable that both Eusebius and Origen, while they repeat the usual tradition of a Hebrew gospel, in their own criticisms plainly assume that St. Matthew himself wrote in the Greek language. And thus the earliest writer destroys his own authority by a statement, certainly untrue on a kindred subject, in the same context; while the writers, whose learning gave them most weight, seem to be

divided in their own judgment, and no trace of the supposed Hebrew gospel can be found, in any credible and direct witness of its existence in later times.

2. Next, are the presumptions, from the circumstances of the church, in favour of a Greek or Hebrew original? The remarks of Hug on this point seem really decisive. We find, from Acts xxii. 2, that even in Jerusalem itself a promiscuous crowd would have understood a discourse in Greek, though they listened to their own Hebrew dialect with greater pleasure. We find that, as early as the appointment of the seven deacons, the number of Greek-speaking converts was so multiplied, as to be an occasion of strife and jealousy in the mother church. In Cæsarea they would, of course, be still more numerous. It is clear, also, that in Galilee of the Gentiles, as its name implies, Greek was more current and usual than in Judea, which was the main seat of the old national associations. Indeed the opinion is most probable, that our Lord himself often used the Greek language, in his discourses to mixed audiences, at least in Galilee. It is certain that Greek was the language of Herod's court, and of several of the Galilean towns, and one of the twelve Apostles has a purely Greek name. According to the Mishna, quoted by Hug, "the Jews were not permitted to compose books in all languages, but it shall only be permitted them to write books in the Greek," and a bill of divorce might be written in Greek or Hebrew. The Professor sums his remarks as follows.

"If St. Matthew wrote Greek, the mass of the people understood him; but for that part of the people who perhaps only spoke the language of the country, he was compensated by those cities which the Greeks had taken from the Jews, by the Hellenistic communities in the holy city, and by the other Hellenists in the Christian school, to whom he could not make himself understood in any other way. If he wrote Hebrew he renounced the great, and perhaps the nobler, part of his readers. At the same time, if he had the adjacent environs in view, Antioch, Tyre, and Sidon, and other cities along the coast, he

could not but give the preference to the Greek. If his whole thoughts were fixed on the latter times of the people, and he wished to write not merely for a few years, he would not write in the language of the Jews, whose state was approaching its dissolution."

3. The analogies, from all the other books of the New Testament, are clearly in favour of a Greek original. For not only the gospels of St. Mark and St. John, written by Jews, but the Epistles of St. Paul to the Hebrew Christians, of St. Peter, the Apostle of the circumcision, and of St. James, the bishop of the Church at Jerusalem, are all in the Greek language, and no trace of a Hebrew autograph is found in any one instance. The gospel of St. Matthew, if it were written in Hebrew, would be a solitary contrast to these other writings, where the reason for choosing the Syriac dialect would seem equally strong. And so far as previous occupation is any guide, a Roman tax-gatherer would be less likely to adopt the Hebrew dialect, than a Pharisee of the strictest sect, like St. Paul, or a fisherman of Capernaum, like St. Peter, or a Jew of Nazareth and of David's lineage, like St. James, all of whom have preferred the Greek, even when writing to Jewish Christians.

4. The internal features of the gospel prove that it is not a mere version. If a translation at all, considerable license must have been used by the unknown translator. The following passages contain indications of a Greek rather than Hebrew original.

i. 16. "The husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called the Christ," (*ὁ χρίστος*). In a translation we should expect to find *Messias*, the Hebrew form of the name. So also i. 17, 18.

i. 23. "They shall call his name Immanuel, which is, being interpreted, God with us."

iv. 18. "Simon, called Peter, and Andrew his brother." In a translation, it would be natural to retain *Cephas*, the Syriac form of the surname.

v. 18. "One iota or one tittle shall not pass from the law, &c." The Greek letter being thus used in a proverbial phrase, makes it probable that the discourse was recorded, and perhaps even that it was preached, in the Greek language.

v. 22. "Whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, (Syr.) shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Fool, (Gr. *μωρὲς*) shall be in danger of hell fire." It is difficult to understand how a mere translation would have given the passage in this form, with a climax formed by a Syriac and a Greek term of reproach.

v. 41. "And whosoever shall compel thee to go with him one mile, (*μίλιον ἐν*) go with him two." The Latinism implies a living Greek dialect, with Latin terms infused, and does not give the idea of a second-hand version from a Syriac original.

xxi. 9, 15. "Hosanna to the son of David, hosanna in the highest." The retention of this Hebrew term alone, when Greek titles are so constant in the gospel, would be an arbitrary distinction in a mere translator, and is therefore another slight presumption for a Greek original.

The passage, xxiii. 7—10, is still more explicit. Our Lord there forbids his disciples to use the Hebrew title, Rabbi, and the equivalent Greek title, *καθηγητῆς*, and appends to both the same reason, "for one is your master" (*καθηγητῆς*). It seems a reasonable conclusion, that Rabbi was one of the Hebrew titles of honour, commonly retained even in the Hellenistic dialect; that our Lord's admonition was actually given in that dialect, and that the Evangelist has recorded it in the Greek dialect, in which it was uttered. For it is not at all likely that *καθηγητῆς* was adopted into the Syriac language, or that a translator would invent a double precept, when our Lord had uttered, and his Apostle recorded, one only.

xxvii. 8. "Wherefore that field is called, The field of blood, unto this day."

17. "Barabbas, or Jesus, which is called Christ."

33. "A place called Golgotha, which is called The place of a skull."

46. "Eli, Eli, lama Sabachthani, that is, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

All these passages have certainly the very tone, which we should expect in an original, rather than a translation.

The quotations from the Old Testament are difficult to explain on the hypothesis of a mere translation. They have a general agreement with the Septuagint, but the variations are characteristic and important. Thus in chap. ii., the version is modified in three passages, so as to be more apposite or perspicuous. The prophecy Isa. ix. 1, is also quoted with important changes, though still based on the Septuagint. The passage Isa. xlii. 1—3, is quoted apparently in a version entirely new, though in many places the reading of the Seventy is adopted without change. Again in Matt. xxvii. 9, 10, the prophecy of Zechariah is quoted very freely, and seems to vary, not only from the Greek translation, but from the present Hebrew text. Yet in the same chapter are found two or three instances of verbal correspondence with the Septuagint version of the twenty-second Psalm. These varieties all tend to shew, either that the gospel was originally written in Greek, or else the translator's office was too weighty and responsible, to make it credible that he should be left altogether uncertain and unknown. The former is by far the simpler view, and most consistent with the plain facts of ecclesiastical history, which give no evidence to fix the person of the supposed translator.

5. A further argument for the early date of the Greek gospel may be drawn from the titles of our Lord. For in this gospel alone he is invariably spoken of under his personal name, Jesus. In St. Mark, he receives the title of reverence twice only, in the last verses. "So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven." In St. Luke, it becomes of frequent occurrence, still more so in the book of Acts, while this and similar titles are of constant use in St. Paul's Epistles.

Even when full allowance has been made for the difference between letters and histories, this gradual variation confirms the view, that St. Luke's gospel was written before the first of St. Paul's Epistles; and still more confirms the usual order of the gospel, and the early date of the Greek gospel of St. Matthew.

6. In the Sermon on the Mount, we find the saying, "Thou shalt not come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing (quadrans)." If this had been written in Hebrew, and translated afterwards into Greek, it is probable that the translator would have used *λεπτον*, a pure Greek term, which we find in St. Luke xii. 59, in the very same expression. But St. Matthew, as a receiver of Roman custom, would be familiar with the quadrans, the least Roman coin, and naturally use it in a Greek history, or retain it unaltered, if our Lord himself had so used it.

The same remark applies to *φραγελλώσας*, xxvii. 26. In a Hebrew gospel the pure Hebrew term would of course be used, and a later translation would substitute the pure Greek, *μαστιγώσας*. But St. Matthew himself, being familiar with a Hellenistic dialect, charged with many Latinisms, would naturally use a term, nearly the same, if not the very same, in which Pilate gave the order for the punishment of Jesus.

Again, the word *ἐπιούσιος*, which is found only in the two gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke, seems to indicate that the former was written in Greek, if not rather that the prayer itself was uttered in that language. The adoption of such a peculiar term, alike by St. Luke and an unknown translator, would be a surprizing coincidence, while St. Luke might very naturally adopt it from the Greek gospel of St. Matthew, or both might possibly retain the actual word which our Lord employed.

Again, the description of the woman of Canaan would probably have been expounded by a translator into the more modern term, which St. Mark has used, a Syro-Phenician. In its actual form, it seems a presumption for the early composition of the Greek gospel.

On the whole, all the internal evidence, whether of style, of

quotation, or of relation to the two other gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke, seem to prove that the present Greek copy of St. Matthew is really from the pen of the Apostle, and not from some unknown hand. Nor is the alleged consent of early writers of much weight, to establish a Hebrew original, which has left no trace of its existence, and which no one seems ever to have seen. All of them, except Papias and Irenæus, are too late to avail as direct testimony. The statement of Papias, with regard to the second gospel, is the exact reverse of the truth, and hence his brief mention of a Hebrew gospel, which every one used to interpret as they could, is of no very serious weight. Irenæus, again, is proved by Scripture evidence to be doubly in error, when he places the second and third gospels after Paul's decease, and that of Matthew during his last imprisonment at Rome. And indeed the supposition that no gospel was written till thirty-six years after the Ascension, and then in Syriac, just at the beginning of the convulsions that scattered and destroyed the Jews, and when the converts, who spoke Greek, must have been tenfold more than those who knew Hebrew only, is very like an historical absurdity. We have an instance at the close of the fourth gospel, and in the lifetime of St. John, of one false tradition that had gone abroad among the disciples, and in which a nucleus of truth was rapidly encrusted with serious error. Now it was a certain truth, that St. Matthew wrote especially for Jewish Christians in Palestine; and those at a distance, who knew of the prevalence among them of a peculiar dialect, and overlooked the equal or greater prevalence of the Greek language, or confounded the provincial and Hebraistic Greek with the proper Syriac tongue, might easily infer that this first gospel was written in Hebrew. But the early reception of the actual gospel, as we now have it; the entire ignorance of those who first allude to a Hebrew gospel, when or by whom it was translated, and the contradictory guesses of later writers; the fact that St. Paul wrote to the Palestine Christians, and St. James to the suffering Jews, not in Hebrew, but in Greek; the

certainty, derived from St. Luke's narrative, that a turbulent and mixed crowd at Jerusalem could understand an address to them in the Hellenistic dialect; and the prospective aim, with which this gospel, like the others, was doubtless written;—all conspire to establish its authenticity, as the work of St. Matthew, and of no other. It is certainly possible that he might previously have written one in Hebrew; but the negative evidence, from its total disappearance, and from the analogy of the other sacred writings, seems considerably to outweigh the vague and inconsistent statements of Papias and Irenæus, on which alone the fact of its existence must depend.

BOOK III.

INTRODUCTION.

THE HISTORICAL REALITY OF THE GOSPELS.

THE presumptions in favour of the early date of the gospels, and their genuineness, which have resulted from the previous examination, will be either greatly weakened, or powerfully confirmed, by the internal character of the history. There is a wide difference, in most instances, between the loose traditions of careless or credulous men, and the narrative of a well-informed historian. The more numerous the narratives which exist of any particular period or biography, the easier it becomes to distinguish between fact and mere fiction, and again, between perfect truth and partial inaccuracy. The principle of undesigned coincidences, so well developed in the *Horæ Paulinæ*, applies chiefly, where documents, entirely different in kind, as letters and direct history, relate to the same events. But where, as in the case of the four gospels, different histories are before us, very similar in their outline, and occupied professedly with the same life, and not even independent of each other, the same test of reality presents itself in an opposite form, and may be called the principle of *Reconcilable Diversity*. The entire sameness of the narrative, in two or three distinct works, would weaken, and almost destroy the authority of all, except the earliest, since it would be a strong proof that they were mere

copies, and that the writers had no independent means of information. On the other hand, positive contradictions would prove that one or other work was inaccurate, and if very numerous and important, would go far to convict them of utter and wilful falsehood. And hence the very test of historical truth, in such cases, is found in the substantial unity of the various narratives, their partial diversity, and the reconcileable nature of that diversity, when due allowance is made for the purpose of each writer, and the individual character of their separate works.

This principle applies with especial force to the history in the Four Gospels. The main attempt of modern Infidelity has been, to disprove their claim as authentic and faithful narratives, and to describe them as the inventions of mere impostors, or as the legendary tales of credulous men. Every diversity has been sedulously noted down, to infer from it an absolute contradiction; while contradictions have been thought to prove, not the partial inaccuracy of a genuine history, but the legendary and unreal character of the whole record. It is well to see clearly, from the first, the double falsehood of such reasoning. There may be real, and even marked diversity, in the picture which two writers draw of the same event, without any contradiction, and even with a positive harmony; just as in architecture, a front and side view, a ground-plan and an elevation, may be almost entirely different, and still correspond in every point to the true ideal of the whole building. And again, even real contradiction in details, where the main event is alike affirmed by each writer, will by no means justify the conclusion, that both are fairy tales, and mere falsehoods, but rather, that both are substantially true, in spite of the partial error which may have mingled with the narratives.

The most celebrated of recent assaults on Christianity is based entirely on the total denial or neglect of these manifest principles of all historical criticism. To examine all its objections, would be a wearisome and superfluous task. The greater part may be summed up in the one argument—The

gospels are not fac-similes, therefore they are mere legends, and of no historical value. Instead of tracking every step in the pathway of the philosophical scorner, resolved beforehand to believe nothing, which requires him to own the hand of God, it will be a wiser course directly to compare the gospels together, and to shew, in each part, the full evidence of historical truth which the comparison affords. Three steps will enter into the proof in each instance. The first will establish their substantial unity, the second, their diversity, wide enough to secure them from the charge of being ignorant or fraudulent copies of each other ; and the third, their reconcileableness in their very diversity. This last feature, if it exist in a lower degree, will prove their historical fidelity, but if complete and full, will go far to justify a claim of perfect accuracy and Divine inspiration.

CHAPTER I.

THE PUBLIC MINISTRY OF JESUS.

THE theory of the mythical origin of the gospels, that last and desperate resource of Modern Infidelity, has compelled its disciples to a diligent and persevering collection of every variation in the accounts of the Four Evangelists, to elicit, if possible, historical contradictions, and compel a forfeiture of their claims to be authentic and faithful records of the life of Jesus. Many, indeed most of these objections, bear evident traces of the source from which they sprung. The accounts are so plainly garbled, the inferences so strained and violent, as to shew that the object was to create, at all costs, the appearance of contradiction, that an excuse might thus be found for setting aside the testimony of the sacred writers. Principles are constantly applied, which, if transferred to profane historians, or seriously adopted by an advocate in courts of law, would be condemned at once for their manifest absurdity. To review all such objections, in detail, would be tedious and unprofitable. It will be endeavoured here to select those points of inquiry, where candid inquirers might experience some difficulty, and to prove that a full examination turns them into new evidence for the truth and integrity of the sacred histories. This chapter, as it will range through the whole course of our Lord's Public Ministry, will be divided into several distinct sections.

§ 1. THE SCENE OF OUR LORD'S MINISTRY.

According to Strauss, and others of the same school, a contradiction exists between St. John and the three other evangelists, with regard to the main theatre of our Lord's ministry. The earlier gospels place it entirely in Galilee, down to the time of the final visit to Jerusalem. St. John, however, places it chiefly in Judea. Wherever he mentions retirement from that province; or a stay in Galilee, he is careful, it is said, to assign some special reason. Hence it is inferred that the Synoptists were ignorant of the facts which he records; or rather, that the two accounts proceed on opposite data, and are irreconcilable.

The objection derives its chief strength from the lax opinions, which have prevailed in Germany, with regard to the historical character of the gospels, and the license of endless transposition which has been assumed in explaining them. When tested by the principles already established, it will yield a new example of the undesigned, but substantial harmony, of the sacred narrative.

First, how many visits to Judea, and of what length, does St. John place within that interval, in which the other gospels are silent about any absence from Galilee? The two limits of time are the return into Galilee after John's imprisonment, and the arrival at Capernaum, previous to a transfer of his ministry to Perea and Judea. Matt. xix. 1. Mark x. 1. To what points of time, in the fourth gospel, do these answer? The former limit is soon determined. We are told expressly, at John iii. 24, that "John was not yet cast into prison," and hence the return through Samaria, which follows, John iv. is plainly the introduction to that public ministry in Galilee, which is described in the three other gospels.

The other limit requires more care to ascertain. The two passages, Matt. xiv. and John vi., relate evidently to the same point of time. After this, St. Matthew records a variety of incidents, and a return to Capernaum, after which follows the

remark—"When Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan." In St. John we read, after the miracle of the loaves—"After these things Jesus walked in Galilee, for he did not choose to walk in Judea, because the Jews were seeking to kill him." Then follows the mention of the visit to Jerusalem, in the middle of the feast of Tabernacles, a transition to the feast of Dedication, a retirement beyond Jordan, a short visit to Bethany, a second retirement to Ephraim, and finally, the arrival at Bethany, six days before the last Passover of the Crucifixion.

It is clear that the feast of Tabernacles, in John vii., was in the same year with the Passover that followed soon after the miracle of the loaves. But a doubt may arise, whether the events in Matt. xv—xviii. were comprised within this interval, or extended to the close of the Jewish year. Since, however, the shorter period is amply sufficient for the events, and the visit in John viii. to Jerusalem was followed apparently by an absence from Galilee, we are at full liberty to assume that the close of Matt. xviii. answers nearly in time to that feast of Tabernacles, in the last year of our Lord's ministry.

Hence the only part of the fourth gospel, which falls within the limits of the ministry in Galilee, recorded by St. Matthew and St. Mark, consists of the fifth and sixth chapters. In this interval the writer places only one visit to Jerusalem, with one remarkable cure. The whole absence, if the feast was the Passover, would be only of seven days, while the history does not require it to exceed one or two days. With regard to the rest of the interval, he expressly notes the continued stay of our Lord in Galilee, because of the persevering malice of the Jews. (John vii. 1.)

Such is the real amount of the contradiction, which has been so confidently asserted to exist. The two first evangelists have omitted one short visit of a few days to Jerusalem, which occurred in the course of the Galilean ministry; while, for the rest of that interval, St. John expressly confirms their narrative,

and assigns the reason why Jesus forbore to attend the other festivals in Judea.

Let us next inquire, whether their statements exclude this visit, or those others which St. John has placed a little later in the history. So far is this from the truth, that St. Luke's gospel evidently implies their occurrence. This is plain from the words ascribed to our Lord, on his last entrance into the city—"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, and ye would not!" Yet, because St. Luke has not formally recorded those earlier visits, he is charged with using words without meaning, and is quoted, along with St. Matthew and St. Mark, as a witness against the fourth gospel, to prove that no such visits ever occurred, or as being falsified by that gospel, if they did really occur!

But a reason is demanded for this restricted range of the earlier gospels, and the alleged insufficiency of those which have been offered, is held to be a proof of historical contradiction in the two statements. Such an axiom of criticism, however, is simply ridiculous. We are not bound, in the case of any historian, to explain all the motives which prompted his choice of a subject, and his selection of details, before we can receive him as a credible authority. The only question is, whether the narratives are consistent, and entirely reconcilable, without recourse to harsh and violent suppositions. If so, the motives of each writer, in his choice of incidents, might remain for ever unknown, without casting one shade of doubt on their common veracity. But, in reality, a very simple explanation may be found. The ministry of Jesus, as we infer from the combined evidence of the gospels, lasted three full years. Since these were occupied, throughout, with works of Divine power, and words of Divine wisdom, a selection was needful, in order to attain the great end of the narrative, practical utility. In making this selection, it was natural to single out that portion, which had most internal unity, both in its theatre and its object, and to pass lightly over the rest. Now,

of the whole period, two years and four months were spent continuously in Galilee and the neighbourhood, with the exception of one short visit to Jerusalem. This main portion of the public ministry would therefore, by the laws of just composition, be first chosen for especial record, with only such allusions to the rest, as would link together the whole narrative, since its main object required a full account of the closing scenes at Jerusalem. In a later, and supplementary narrative, the writer might, just as naturally, dwell upon the omitted portions. We have thus a simple and natural explanation why St. John, who wrote much later, should record, almost exclusively, the events which occurred beyond the limits of Galilee. In pursuing this design, however, he has abandoned the very appearance of a continuous history. His work is a series of historical fragments, successive, it is true, in order of time, but otherwise connected by their spiritual unity alone. In chap. v. the events of one or two days are interposed between others, which must have happened almost a year earlier, and a whole year later; while the occurrences of a single half week, at the feast of tabernacles, fill twice the space which has been allotted to the two previous years. The contrast, then, in the apparent scene of the ministry, results directly from the nature of the selected events, and only confirms the strictly historical character of all the four gospels.

But the contrast is said to be deeper, in the opposite tone of these gospels. St. Matthew always assigns a reason for any departure from Galilee, while St. John follows the same rule as to any absence from Judea. Hence one regards Judea, the other, Galilee, as the proper theatre of the ministry of Jesus.

This objection rests on an entire misrepresentation. For the fourth gospel, on its first mention of Galilee, describes Jesus as returning thither, without stating any special inducement. It has been affirmed that this journey appears to be occasioned only by the invitation to the feast at Cana; but the gospel neither asserts nor implies anything of the kind, and the supposition is a gloss, equally violent and unnatural. The invitation was to Jesus

and his disciples, and these disciples were not called, until the journey into Galilee was resolved upon ; to say nothing of the unlikelihood that such an invitation would be sent to Jesus in Judea, and by the banks of Jordan. The next return is ascribed, by St. Matthew and St. Mark, to John's imprisonment; by the fourth gospel, to the jealousy of the Pharisees;—two motives quite consistent, and which equally imply that our Lord did not transfer his ministry to Galilee without a strong practical inducement. After this, the earlier gospels represent that ministry to have been exercised entirely in Galilee, until the third year was far advanced ; and the fourth gospel, in entire harmony with them, mentions only one short absence at Jerusalem during two whole years. It has been affirmed, indeed, that the retirement across the sea of Galilee, John vi. 1, is made a direct consequence of the malice evinced just before at Jerusalem, and this is supported by quoting the words that follow in John vii. 1. No person, however, honestly seeking the truth, could fall into such an error. The two expressions—"Jesus went up to Jerusalem"—"he departed across the sea of Tiberias," and the incidental statement in the discourse that follows, that it was spoken in the synagogue at Capernaum, all prove that, in the writer's view, the western side of the lake, or the province of Galilee, was the usual scene of the ministry of Jesus. Even the mark of time given in vi. 3, that the Passover was nigh, clearly shews that this chapter is a fresh narrative, which does not stand in immediate sequence with the visit to Jerusalem. The words in vii. 1, only confirm this view. They assume that our Lord left Galilee for Jerusalem only at the feasts, but that he departed that year from his usual practice, and did not go up to the Passover, so as to continue six months longer in Galilee. Instead of contradicting the account in the other gospels, the Evangelist confirms them in the strongest manner. The coincidence, being indirect, is only rendered the more striking.

The supposition that our Lord remained at Jerusalem between the Feasts of Tabernacles and Dedication, which Strauss has

adopted from Tholuck and other modern critics, and turned to his own account, is at variance with the plain tenour of the history. For he had delayed his visit to that very feast, because of the malice of the Jewish rulers, and in order to shorten the time during which he was exposed to their machinations. During the feast, however, the danger of our Lord, from his popularity with the provincial Jews, would be much less than after its close. Hence the only view, consistent with the scope of the narrative, is that Jesus left the city soon after the parable was spoken, and did not appear there again until his brief and sudden visit at the Feast of Dedication. Again, the words of verse 40 are an intimation that he retired to Perea, where, at the very same period, the two first gospels describe him as having begun to exercise his ministry. Thus, at every point, instead of contradiction, we discover fresh evidence of real but hidden harmony.

The following are the results of the whole enquiry. Our Lord's public ministry lasted three full years, and began and closed with a Jewish Passover. From the first Passover until about Pentecost, its scene was Judea; but he removed to Galilee in consequence of the rising jealousy of the Pharisees, immediately after John's imprisonment. He continued in Galilee and its border districts for nearly two years and a half, except one brief visit to Jerusalem at the second Passover. The malice then aroused led him to abstain from a like visit at the Passover which followed the miracle of the loaves, and thus occasioned a continuous absence of eighteen months from Jerusalem. Six months before his death he went up again at the Feast of Tabernacles; but for the same reason, not until the middle of the feast, and at its close retired to Perea, instead of Galilee. After another still shorter visit at the Feast of Dedication, he retired thither a second time. After a short visit to Bethany, where he raised Lazarus from the grave, he retired a third time, not to Perea, but to Ephraim, on the border of Samaria. Last of all, he made, with unusual publicity, a journey from Galilee through

Perea up to Jerusalem, and arrived at Bethany six days before his death. The two earliest gospels single out for notice that main period of his ministry which was spent in Galilee, from John's imprisonment to the last Feast of Tabernacles, and after a brief allusion to the later stay in Perea, pass on to the closing events of the journey to Jerusalem. St. Luke, besides a fuller account of our Lord's birth and infancy, gives a narrative of the last journey, with the Mission of the Seventy, which was its immediate preparation. Last of all, St. John dwells on the omitted intervals, from the temptation to John's imprisonment, the isolated visit at the second Passover, the later visits at the two feasts in the third year; the abode in Perea, and the visit to Bethany. We have thus a series of internal coincidences so latent as to be free from all suspicion of design, yet so real as to form a decisive evidence that the gospels are genuine and faithful histories of the life of Jesus.

§ 2. THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE GOSPELS.

One important test, by which to detect spurious narratives, and confirm the truth of genuine history, consists in the internal agreement or disagreement of the marks of time. And hence the discordance of commentators on the duration of our Lord's ministry, and the arrangement of the events in their true order, has lent some plausible ground to the assaults of modern infidels, who proclaim that the gospels are vague and uncertain, and even inconsistent in their chronology. The loose views of their structure, which have prevailed of late, even among the more orthodox critics of Germany, as Neander, Tholuck, and Olshausen, have lent some apparent force to this argument. In opposition to these laboured assaults, and the loose defences which have invited them, it is needful to develop briefly the internal harmony, in a chronological sense, of the whole narrative. The valuable and learned Dissertations of Mr. Greswell have done much towards

the successful vindication of the sacred history. The course of the reasoning, in this section, will be distinct, but the results will be found, in all important respects, to agree substantially with his conclusions.

The first point of comparison between the fourth and the three other gospels is found in John i. 29. "The next day John seeth Jesus walking," &c. That this took place after our Lord's baptism, is plain from verses 32, 33; and since the temptation followed the baptism immediately, and the interview was followed at once by a return to Galilee, it is clear that the time is later than the close of the temptation. It is hardly less clear that it follows very soon after, since it is not likely that our Lord would linger on the banks of Jordan, when the temptation was ended.

The fourth gospel, then, takes up the narrative from the close of the temptation, when Jesus was returning, in a course which led by the scene of his baptism, into Galilee. The events, as far as iii. 24, and the close of that chapter, are said to be prior to John's imprisonment. Hence the return into Galilee through Samaria, chapter iv, is the same which is mentioned in the three other gospels. The account in the fourth gospel is therefore a supplement to theirs, from the close of the temptation until the opening of the ministry in Galilee. The first Passover took place in that interval, and gives us a fixed starting point for the whole chronology.

The miracle of the five thousand, which is related in all the four gospels, is the next datum of the inquiry. We are told, indeed, but without a shadow of evidence, that St. John differs entirely from the others, in his account of the events which precede and follow. If the words, *μετὰ ταῦτα*, in vi. 1, implied immediate sequence, they must imply it also in v. 1. We should thus be landed in the double absurdity, that Jesus went back to Jerusalem to a feast, as soon as he had left Jordan, through Samaria, to avoid the hatred of the Pharisees, and that on his return from that feast direct to the further side of the lake of Tiberias, the Passover was already at hand. It is said, further,

that in Matthew and Mark, Jesus proceeds afterwards to a district where he was less known, but in John, direct to Capernaum. Even the latter statement is inexact, but the former is quite untrue. The two writers only tell us, that as soon as Jesus landed, the people recognized him; a strange proof indeed that it was a district where he was unknown. St. John tells us that the disciples went over the sea towards Capernaum, but that they were baffled all through the night by the tempest; when it was stilled, he only remarks that the ship was immediately at the land whither they were going. They could not be very far from Capernaum, it is true, but there is nothing to prove that they were close to the city. The tempest might have driven them from their direct course, and the spot they were striving to reach, when the storm was stilled, would of course be the nearest and most convenient landing-place on the western side. The words which follow prove that it was some other place, and not Capernaum, or else the writer would not have used the vague and general expression, "the other side of the sea." Thus, in the events which precede and follow, all the accounts are in perfect harmony.

Now St. John tells us that, at the time of the miracle, the Passover was near at hand. Hence the events from the opening of our Lord's ministry, down to Matt. xv. 1. Mark vii. 1. Luke ix. 17, occupy either one, two, or three complete years. The brevity of the accounts, compared with the year which follows, down to the crucifixion, makes the largest of these numbers an improbable estimate, so that our choice may be said to lie between one and two years.

Here St. Luke's gospel supplies a decisive test. Nearly half way between the baptism, chapter iii., and the other limit, ix. 37, we are told that the disciples went through the cornfields on a second-first Sabbath. The phrase, as the best critics agree, denotes a Sabbath near the time of the Passover, when the first-fruits had been presented, and before the harvest was reaped. Hence there must be an interval of two years from the baptism,

shortly before the first Passover, to the miracle of the loaves, when a third Passover was near at hand. The fourth gospel completes the outline of the chronology, by mentioning the three visits to Jerusalem in the last year, at the feast of Tabernacles, of Dedication, and the last Passover.

The events, ch. iv. 1, and ch. vi. 1, in the fourth gospel, are thus referred to the answering points of time in the three other histories, and are proved to be two years apart, deducting only the time of the ministry in Judea after the first Passover. Now the nature of the events is a clear proof that this was of no long continuance. The only reason for a contrary view, drawn from John iv. 35. rests on a hasty and superficial interpretation of the passage. Our Lord there simply alludes to a proverbial saying, founded on the interval between seed-time and harvest, and applies it to the relation between the prophets and his own disciples, who would complete their messages.

Since the interval of iv. 1, and vi. 1, is thus easily determined, it is of less importance to decide whether or not the visit in John v. 1. belongs to the Passover. Yet this disputed point may be settled, at least by very strong presumptive evidence.

Two reasons are given in the *Leben Jesu*, to prove that this feast was not a Passover. The writer, it is said, would not have glanced so lightly at the most important of all the feasts. Such an argument has no force, since every feast alike is distinctly named throughout the gospel, the Passover, the Tabernacles, and the Feast of Dedication. The silence must therefore have some other cause than the unimportant nature of this particular feast. The second reason is, that there would thus be an interval of a whole year between this and the next chapter. But, since the whole interval from iv. 1, to vi. 1, has been proved to be not much less than two years, this objection also is plainly untenable. In reality, since the second Passover lies nearly halfway between the limits, the hiatus will be less than on almost any other supposition. The objection of others, that our Lord would have been absent too long, on this view, from the feasts, is entirely groundless for

the same reason. And besides, a cause for that absence is plainly assigned, in the persevering malice of the Jewish rulers.

The following reasons appear to prove that the feast was a Passover. First, it is certain that a Passover did occur between the return to Galilee, at the close of the fourth, and the voyage across the lake, at the opening of the sixth chapter. Since only one visit seems to have taken place in this interval, it is more likely, in the abstract, to have been a Passover than any other, since it was this feast which marked the opening and the close of our Lord's public ministry. Next, St. John specifies the visits at the first and the last Passovers, and gives a distinct reason why our Lord did not visit Jerusalem at the third Passover. Hence it is reasonable to infer that he would either mention a visit at the second Passover, or give a reason why no such visit was paid. This he has done, if the hypothesis be true, but not otherwise. Thirdly, the phraseology confirms this view. The writer first calls that festival, "the Passover of the Jews," (ii. 13). He then speaks of miracles wrought "in the Passover, in the feast." He next refers to it simply as "the feast." "The Galileans received him, having seen all things that he did in Jerusalem at the feast," "they also went to the feast," (iv. 45). Then follows the statement in question. "After these things there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem." The absence of the article may be explained by the Hebrew idiom, which prefixes it to the second only of two nouns in construction; or more simply, by the annual recurrence of the festival. No other festival has been once alluded to, and the Passover has been described, a few verses before, by this indefinite phrase. It is not until we reach chap. vii. 2, that any other kind of feast is named in the gospel. Hence the context leads us to suppose that the Passover is meant, and that the article is dropt, merely to denote that it was a fresh recurrence of the annual festival, already named.

But a more decisive argument remains. The feast, in John v. is marked by the first origin of a systematic design to put Jesus

to death, on the ostensible ground that he violated the Sabbath. Now the same offence is charged upon him by the Pharisees on the second-first Sabbath in St. Luke, and on another Sabbath, soon after, where it is connected with the same murderous design. This close resemblance of the events, since the second-first Sabbath was within a week after the second Passover, is a strong presumption that the feast in St. John, and that Passover, are the same. The opposition, fully aroused at the festival itself, would thus appear to have continued, in unabated force, through the following sabbaths, and to have pursued our Lord into Galilee after his return.

Thus the alleged impossibility of harmonizing the fourth gospel, in its chronology, with the three others, disappears entirely; and along with it, a host of infidel objections and critical cavils are swept away. But the adjustment, in the last six months, requires greater care, from the defective theories embraced by some of the ablest and most recent commentators.

The statements to be reconciled are these. St. Matthew, after bringing down his narrative beyond the Transfiguration, and a later return to Capernaum, continues in these words—"When Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan." St. John, however, says that our Lord went up secretly to Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles, alludes to his presence at the Feast of Dedication, without any statement of an intervening absence, and then adds that he went away beyond Jordan, where John at first baptized,—that he returned to Bethany,—retired to Ephraim,—and finally, came by way of Bethany to Jerusalem. The question arises, where the interval was spent between the feasts of Tabernacles and of Dedication. Many have supposed a return to Galilee, while most of the foreign critics, of late, maintain that Jesus stayed in or near Jerusalem.

This last hypothesis, however, is highly unreasonable. For the Evangelist represents Jesus to have delayed his visit till the middle of the feast, on account of the danger from the malice

of the rulers. To suppose that he remained in or near the city, for two or three months, is directly to contradict the scope of the whole narrative. The mere silence of the Evangelist is a negative argument, of no weight whatever to disprove our Lord's absence; since this gospel plainly records, in direct sequence, events nearly a year apart, without any mention of those which intervene. On the other hand, a return to Galilee does not agree well with the earlier gospels, which exhibit, at this point of time, a transfer of the ministry from that province to the districts beyond Jordan. And the fourth gospel, on closer observation, hints the same fact. For after the feast of Dedication, the sacred writer tells us that Jesus "went away again beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing at the feast, and there abode." We may thus infer that he had retired thither previously, in the interval of the two feasts. Now since our Lord, in his last journey, passed from Galilee, through Perea to Jerusalem, we have thus a further key to the transition in the two first gospels. Having related at length the ministry in Galilee, when they have come to the period of its transfer to Perea, they do not think it needful to revert to Galilee once more, and recount only the incidents of the last journey, in Perea and Judea, on his way to Jerusalem.

The supplementary nature of the fourth gospel is therefore clearly proved, and the chronology shewn to be in entire harmony. It recounts the events from the Temptation to John's imprisonment, chiefly in Judea, before the others began their record of the public ministry in Galilee. Where they commence, St. John suspends his own narrative, after mentioning the very first miracle after that return, and quoting the words of our Lord, with a varied application, to explain this long transfer of his ministry from Judea, his native province, to Galilee, his adoptive home. During this long stay in Galilee, St. John records one visit only to Jerusalem, and marks the systematic persecution which took its rise at that time, and of which the persevering continuance is seen in the earlier gospels, where it

dates from its exhibition, one week later, after his return. The coincidence, at the close of the second year, is proved by the common waymark, in the miracle of the five thousand. St. John here states, with emphasis, as if to explain their histories, that Jesus did not visit Jerusalem at this Passover, nor until six months later at the feast of Tabernacles. Here the other gospels express, and St. John implies, and partly expresses, a transfer of the ministry to Perea, or the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan, the district where John at the first baptized. The fancied contradiction, when examined, only discloses the deep and hidden harmony, which pervades every portion of the inspired word of God.

§ 3. ON THE MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

In all the four gospels, the account of our Lord's public ministry is prefaced by the appearance of John the Baptist, and his testimony to the Messiahship of Jesus. Many objections, however, have been started against this part of the narrative, which require a brief examination.

1. The various notes of time, in Luke iii. 1, 2, are alone fatal to the mythical theory. They compel us to the alternative that the Evangelist was either a deliberate liar, or a careful and well-informed historian. No collector of uncertain legends could prefix such a full and formal chronology, without fixing on his work the brand of gross and conscious falsehood.

The general accuracy of these statements is reluctantly allowed; but the mention of Lysanias occasions a bold attempt to destroy the authority of the Evangelist. The silence of Josephus is said to prove that no such person then existed, and that the writer has drawn a false conclusion from the mention of an earlier Lysanias, and thus ascribed a tetrarch to Abilene, when it either belonged to Philip, or was part of the Roman province.

This alternative is alone a full proof that the objection is altogether futile. For if Josephus tells us so little on the subject, that the objector cannot decide whether Abilene belonged to Philip or the Roman president, what presumptuous folly it must be to charge the gospel with falsehood, because it assigns the district to Lysanias, and this merely on the ground that another Lysanias was ruler over it, fifty years earlier! But in reality, the statements of Josephus, when carefully examined, confirm the account they are brought to disprove. The death of the elder Lysanias took place early in Herod's reign, before Palestine was parted into tetrarchies. It was next held by one Zenodorus, whose disputes with Herod are related at some length. At the next partition, after Herod's death, it is called "the house of Zenodorus," and we are told that "some part" of it was given to Philip, along with Trachonitis and Batanea, but the destination of the other part is not mentioned. At this time the division of Palestine into tetrarchies first began. The next mention of it is at the accession of Caligula, A. D. 37. He "bestowed on Herod the tetrarchy of Philip, and gave him also the tetrarchy of Lysanias." Here the altered title, since it was termed before "the house of Zenodorus" and the description, as the *tetrarchy* of Lysanias, while the elder Lysanias is never called a tetrarch, and died long before that division began, are a clear indication that Josephus does tacitly recognize a later Lysanias, who was tetrarch of the district after the death of Herod, and before that of Tiberius, a contemporary of the tetrarch Philip, to whom only a part of "the house of Zenodorus" had been given. The rest of it must therefore have had some other ruler. The statement of St. Luke, therefore, agrees fully with the just inference from the words of Josephus, while it disagrees thoroughly with the false inference that superficial critics have drawn. It is thus a distinct pledge to us of the writer's accurate knowledge, and of the truth of the sacred narrative.

2. It is objected, again, that historical consistency requires

a longer time for the Baptist's ministry than St. Luke's narrative will allow, in order that he might form so wide a circle of disciples, and rise into such lasting veneration. Hence it is inferred that his ministry must have lasted nearly ten years, and that St. Luke's statement, who makes him only six months older than our Lord, must be rejected as a mere legend.

Now in reality, the statements in the gospels are historically consistent in every part, and the critical alternative proposed is a legendary and impossible fiction. A space of six or nine months, before our Lord's ministry, is quite enough to account for the reputation of the Baptist. His peculiar habits and costume, concurring with the aspect of the times, would create the deepest sensation. The furthest limit of Palestine was not more than four or five days' easy journey from the banks of Jordan where he baptized, and the people were in the constant habit of annual journeys for religious objects. Hence one such journey to the banks of Jordan would cost them little effort. Half a year would be long enough for the excitement, from the appearance of such a prophet, to reach its height, and create the suspense described by St. Luke; while the abrupt close of his labours, through the malice of Herod, would deepen the impression, and make it indelible. No time would thus be given for the reaction, which would otherwise have infallibly been roused by the severity of his teaching. He was thus like a meteor of bright hope, withdrawn suddenly from the general view, before detraction and envy could destroy the impression made by his austere virtue, or silence the echo of his words in the consciences of men. On the other hand, a ministry of ten years, or even of half that length, is inconsistent with the jealousy of the tetrarch, and of the Jewish rulers, contradicts every statement in the four gospels, and is without one grain of evidence in its favour from profane authors. In fact, there is a beautiful harmony in the indirect statements of the Evangelists. St. Luke tells us that the Baptist was six months older than our Lord, and that our Lord himself was about thirty when he began his ministry. But since one date is

given for their common origin, it seems implied that they both began within one year. Accordingly St. John, the day before the close of our Lord's temptation, represents a commission to have been sent from the Pharisees, inquiring into the nature of the Baptist's authority. That such a message should be delayed for six months after his first appearance is possible, but that it should be deferred till the close of five or ten years, is an absurd supposition, and even to suppose the interval of a whole year is very unreasonable. And hence there is an indirect, but very observable harmony, between the independent statements of the two gospels. For it results, from this comparison, that our Lord's forerunner, who was evidently a priest by birth, also began his ministry when thirty years old, the appointed age for priestly service.

3. A serious contradiction is said to exist between the fourth and the other gospels, with regard to the Baptist's knowledge of Jesus. According to St. John, he knew him not, until the miraculous sign of the descent of the Spirit was given. In the other gospels, he recognizes Jesus as the Messiah, before he baptizes him. Hence the more daring infidels have ascribed to our Lord and the Baptist a studied dissimulation; while the *Leben Jesu* simply imputes to the writers themselves, a contradiction that cannot be cleared away.

The two accounts, however, are perfectly consistent. St. Luke tells us that John "was in the desert, until the day of his shewing unto Israel." The words plainly imply a course of marked seclusion, in harmony with his public character, and one which was designed to prepare him for his work, by investing him with a prophetic dignity when his preaching began. And since our Lord dwelt at Nazareth, they would of course be personally unknown to each other, just as the Baptist affirms in the fourth gospel. Yet he would probably have learned from his parents the birth of the Messiah, and that he was no other than the son of Mary. Since, however, Jesus was unknown to him by face, whatever might be the inference of John from the facts he had

learned through his parents, it was fitting that there should be some public sign, before he proclaimed to the people that the son of Mary, who had now come to his baptism, was their long-expected Messiah. On the other hand, it is reasonable to think that Jesus would announce his name to the Baptist, when he offered himself to be baptized. The simple words, "I am Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Mary," would be a proof to John, personally, that the Messiah stood before him, and might well elicit the confession in St. Matthew, "I have need to be baptized of thee." But in his public capacity, as the greatest of the prophets, a clearer token was suitable, and had also been promised him, to be his Divine warrant for pointing his disciples to Jesus. Hence the sign recorded in the gospels, which was visible, as their accounts imply, to Jesus and the Baptist alone. The public seal of Messiahship was now given, and John saw, and bare record, that Jesus was the Son of God.

4. Again, the inquiry of St. John, in Matthew and Luke, "Art thou he that should come?" is thought to be inconsistent with the full testimony he bears to Jesus in the fourth gospel. It is urged, further, that the account of this gospel is internally improbable, and that the writer falsely ascribes to the Baptist ideas of Christ, which are exclusively his own.

The former objection depends on the construction given to the words of the message. It is urged that St. John makes the inquiry in his own behalf, and not for his disciples merely; that the words imply doubt, not full conviction; that the report of the works of Jesus would tend to increase confidence in his claims, not to diminish it; and hence that the account, if true, disproves the statements of the fourth gospel, and shews that the Baptist began doubtfully, at a later period, to recognize the claim of Jesus to be the Messiah. But a juster view of the message entirely sets aside this reasoning. The words are clearly an expostulation of this kind. "If you are the Messiah, as I have testified, and these works declare, why this long delay before you enter on the main work of Messiah's office, to deliver

your oppressed servants, and purge the floor with the fan of judgment from wicked oppressors? After the true Messiah is come, have we still to wait for some other person, to fulfil the task assigned by the prophets to the Mighty Deliverer of his people?" On this view of the message, the whole account is consistent, and equally removed from the two opposite extremes, of sceptical uncertainty, or direct encouragement. If the Baptist had lapsed into unbelief, how could our Lord have proceeded to contrast his character with the "reed shaken by the wind?" If he meant to encourage Jesus in his work, to say nothing of the unfitness of the occasion, and the violent strain upon the words themselves, how are we to account for the warning voice of the answer—"Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me?" The fault was one, rather of impatience than of unbelief, from the Baptist's dim apprehension of that work of mercy which our Lord came, first of all, to fulfil, and of which the details are partly given in his gracious reply. And hence the conduct of the Baptist, who was staggered and perplexed by our Lord's quiet, gentle ministry, though his faith led him to apply to Jesus himself for the explanation, is in perfect harmony with his whole character, when we consider the probable effect of his own long imprisonment, and the contrast between our Lord's actual course, and his own expectations of Messiah's regal authority and solemn judgment.

5. The other objection brought against St. John's gospel has been developed into the hypothesis, that Jesus was at first simply a disciple of John, who, after his imprisonment, carried on his ideas, and attained higher and more liberal views, without ceasing to revere his predecessor; that tradition first added the legend of an approving notice given him by John, while in prison; that since this came rather late, an earlier testimony was devised, which accounts for the interview of the mothers in St. Luke; that since it was not only late, but doubtful, the fourth gospel made a further progress, with positive statements, by the Baptist, that Jesus was the Messiah, and

clear declarations that he was the Son of God, and an atoning Saviour. Finally, 'that since the fourth gospel aims at unity, the later tradition excludes the dubious message from the prison, which is therefore totally recast in the message of the Pharisees; while the earlier gospels, being looser compilations, received both the earlier and the more recent tradition.

We have here a specimen of those legends, for which modern infidels are content to renounce the clear evidence of four consenting histories. The whole rests on two assumptions, that the message of John implies greater unbelief, and the account of the fourth gospel, greater faith, in the mind of the Baptist, than agrees with the other statements. The first of these assumptions has been already disproved. Not only does it impute to the writers the worst folly as well as falsehood, but is contradicted by the message itself; for we cannot explain the words, "or do we look for another?" if the Baptist was only beginning to suspect that Jesus was the Messiah. On the other hand, they are quite natural, if he still believed him to be indeed the true Messiah, and was only perplexed by his delay in manifesting his regal glory.

The other assumption borrows its seeming force from the admissions into which some modern critics have been betrayed by their lax views of inspiration. For if John iii. 31—36 be not the words of the Baptist, the writer can hardly be cleared from the charge, which Strauss brings against him, that he has deceived his readers, and led them to ascribe his own words to the Baptist, as a distinct and earlier testimony to Jesus. But there is no adequate ground for this unnatural construction. For what, even according to the other gospels, is the view which John must have held of Jesus? He must have known of the visit of Mary, of his mother's confession, and his father's song of praise. He must therefore have learned that Jesus was the Deliverer so long promised, the Day-spring from on high, sent to enlighten the people who sat in darkness, and to guide their feet into the way of peace. In his own teaching, he had pro-

claimed that he was not worthy to stoop down and unloose the shoe-latchet of this great Successor. Lastly, we learn from the same authorities that he had seen the Spirit descending upon Jesus, and heard a voice proclaiming over him—"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." After such an habitual sense of Messiah's vast superiority, and such clear testimonies that the Son of Mary was the Messiah, what phrase is there ascribed to the Baptist in the fourth gospel, which is not consistent in his lips? The words, "He that cometh from above is above all," are an echo of his father's song, that the Day-spring from on high had visited Israel. The statement that "no man receiveth his testimony," is an inference which the stern reprover of sin would draw from the unfitness of the multitudes, who flocked to his baptism, to receive a Messiah so holy as he pictured him to be. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand," is merely an echo of the voice he had heard, not long before, from heaven; while the opposite issues of life and death, on receiving and rejecting Christ, are only another form of the truth he had solemnly proclaimed to the people, that the Messiah would gather his wheat into the garner, and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

But the phrases, it is urged, are peculiar to St. John's style, and therefore could not belong to the Baptist. Five instances are given to prove this assertion. The first of these, *to seal*, occurs once in St. Matthew, only once beside in all St. John's writings, but five times in St. Paul's Epistles! The word *ἀνωθεν*, with the meaning, *from above*, occurs only twice in all St. John's writings, and three times in the short Epistle of St. James! The two words, for *testimony*, occur thirteen times in the other gospels, five times in that of St. John, where the writer himself speaks, and ten times in the discourses, seven times in his Epistles, and nine times in St. Paul's writings. The phrase, "to have eternal life," never occurs in the gospel, except in the discourses, and only twice in St. John's Epistles. In the discourses, it occurs

once in the first, and eight times in the fourth gospel. The two other phrases—‘he whom God hath sent’—and ‘the Father loveth the Son,’ answer closely to the words of Zacharias, and to the voice from heaven. Such is the evidence on which our modern unbelievers venture to charge the beloved St. John with deception and falsehood.

But why, it is asked, should John have continued to baptize, if he clearly believed that Jesus was the Messiah? The purpose of the rite must then have been accomplished. This is indeed a preposterous style of objection to the truth of the gospels. The writer has made the circumstance prominent in his narrative, that John and Jesus were baptizing together, at the time when this testimony was given. How ridiculous it must be, after eighteen centuries, to set up an abstract theory as to the purpose of John’s baptism, in the teeth of all the evidence, and then to reason from this falsehood in disproof of a contemporary narrative! According to all the gospels, the great design of the Baptist’s mission was a call to repentance, and to preparation for the Messiah, because his kingdom was near at hand. It was not the main work of the forerunner to indicate the person of the Messiah, and he seems to have done this only to a small number of his more earnest disciples. A moral preparation was needed, without which no outward testimony would avail, and this preparation was clearly incomplete when our Lord’s own ministry began.

The further charge is brought against the fourth gospel, that it transforms the Baptist from a practical preacher into a speculative Christologist, from a hard and unbending, to a yielding and self-renouncing character. But the reason of the difference is very plain, that this gospel is merely a supplement to the others, with the express design to place on record some remarkable testimonies, which they had omitted, to the Divine Sonship of Jesus. The general character of the Baptist’s ministry must have been familiarly known for forty or fifty years, when the gospel was written. The writer assumes the main facts in the other gospels to be also known to his readers. This is especially

clear in his mention of the Baptist, from the incidental and cursory manner, in which he introduces the reply to the Pharisees, and from the allusion to St. John's imprisonment, in passing, merely as a note of time. Yet even here the question of the Pharisees—"Art thou Elias?" evidently implies the same character in the Baptist, of a stern Reformer, which is prominent in the other gospels.

6. It is further objected, as highly incredible, that when Herod had imprisoned the Baptist, Jesus should retire for safety into Galilee, Herod's own province. Hence it is inferred that a false motive has been assigned for the journey. But here, too, the fancied objection is an undesigned coincidence. The fourth gospel, quite incidentally, shews that it was from the Pharisees, and not from Herod, that the danger arose which led to this retirement into Galilee. Their jealousy, already awakened, would now centre upon him alone. The statements, when thus compared, contain internal evidence of their consistency and truth.

§ 4. THE CLAIMS OF JESUS AS MESSIAH.

On this vital subject a divergency is said to exist between St. John and the three other gospels. St. John represents our Lord, throughout, to have been consistent in advancing his claims, while the others exhibit a discernible vacillation. The persuasion of the disciples appears to vanish, and Jesus himself becomes reserved in his declarations. Hence the strange hypothesis is advanced, that he arrived gradually at the conviction that he was the Messiah, after his ministry was begun; that the former gospels confound the two periods together, intermixing statements really successive in time, while the fourth gospel has entirely obliterated the earlier period of uncertainty and hesitation. This objection, of course, falls to the ground, if it can be shewn that all the gospels exhibit one consistent principle in ex-

ercise, alike in the statements, and the reserve of our blessed Lord.

Now the maxims which guided our Lord are not hard to discover, on a comparison of the whole history. His claims were stated and enforced in every way, except by mere assertions, that would have rested solely upon his personal authority. These were limited to sincere inquirers, or his private intercourse with his most intimate disciples, and even in this case, were used chiefly to confirm and deepen the faith which was already begun.

That our Lord practically advanced his claim, from the first, is taught as plainly by the other Evangelists as by St. John. Thus in the Sermon on the Mount, at the opening of the first gospel, we have the significant words: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." And again at the close—"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye workers of iniquity." In St. Luke, again, he begins his public ministry by reading a promise of the Messiah, and then adding the brief comment, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears."

As we advance in the course of the history, similar statements recur frequently, but mixed with others, where our Lord predicts his own rejection and sufferings. From the confession of Peter to the close of his ministry, there is no concealment of his true character from the disciples, though the growing malice of rulers rendered a partial retirement and reserve necessary, until the appointed time drew near for his Divine expiation.

Again, in the fourth gospel we have clear proofs that our Lord did not advance his claim, usually, in the explicit form of direct assertion. The Jews repeatedly complain on this very ground. "Then said the Jews unto him, Who art thou? Jesus said unto them, The same that I said unto you from the beginning." "Jesus said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"

He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" "Then came the Jews round about him and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." It is clear, from these passages, that the same reserve is ascribed to our Lord in the fourth as in the other gospels. In fact, his whole conduct, as portrayed in each narrative, may be summed up in his own contrasted statements. "If I bear record of myself, my record is not true: there is another that beareth witness of me, and I know that the witness he beareth of me is true." "If I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin."

But it is objected that in St. John, both Andrew, Philip and Nathanael, confess Jesus to be Messiah at their first interview; while in the other gospels, it is only after prolonged intercourse, and shortly before his sufferings, that the ardent Peter arrives at the conclusion, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." The blessing that follows is thought to prove that this was not a long cherished opinion, but a new light which had just flashed on the mind of Peter, and through him on his fellow-apostles.

Here too, a little attention to the facts not only removes the difficulty, but turns it into a striking evidence of historic truth. The disciples, after their first call, were subject to two opposite influences; the powerful testimony of our Lord's miracles, with the moral glory of his teaching and example, and the daily and hourly disappointment of their pre-conceived notions with regard to their promised Messiah. With a large class of his followers, typified in the parable of the stony ground, the prejudice arising from this latter cause had more weight than all the positive evidence of his Messiahship, so that they drew back, "and walked no more with him." It was therefore a sign that the faith of the Apostles was of a more genuine kind, and had a deeper and Diviner source, when it outlived these temptations, and continued firm while so many stumbled and fell away. In fact, the confession of Peter was made at a time when our Lord had withdrawn

even from Galilee through the bitter hostility of the Jewish rulers and Pharisees, and retired within the tetrarchy of Philip to the furthest limit of Palestine. To confess Christ at such a time shewed the power of Divine grace on the heart of the Apostle, and hence led naturally to that emphatic blessing. That the conviction had only just begun to flash upon his mind, is contradicted, not only by the context, but by the previous history of Peter in the same gospel. (Matt. x. 18—25, 32, 33 ; xiii. 11, 37, 41 ; xiv. 28—33.)

Again, our Lord's conduct, as described in the fourth gospel, reveals the same principle of action which is seen in the other narratives. In the call of the six disciples, it is the Baptist, and not Jesus himself, who declares him to be the Messiah, and our Lord merely accepts in silence the testimony thus borne to his claims. It is Philip who says to Nathanael, "We have found the Messiah ;" and Jesus does not accept Nathanael's homage, till the confession has spontaneously arisen. "Thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Israel." In the first visit to Jerusalem, no mention appears of a direct claim, in words, to be the Messiah, but still the claim is really made in the cleansing of the temple, and in the title given to it, "the house of my Father." The discourse with Nicodemus is a partial exception to the general reserve. But his case was unique and peculiar. He was a sincere inquirer, versed already in Jewish learning, and an earnest teacher in Israel. His timidity would alone be a pledge that he would not be forward to repeat the testimony to others ; and his abode in Jerusalem, surrounded by the rulers, would shut him out from any further intercourse with our Lord. Hence a fuller measure of truth was verbally entrusted to him at once, because it was sure to have only a calm and gradual development, in a mind beset with fear and prejudice, but still sincere and earnest in desire for the truth of God.

The next exception is the woman of Samaria, where a similar reason appears. Since the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, our Lord's plainer declaration of his Messiahship to this

woman of Sychar, would not hinder the calm development of his claims among the people of Israel. The disciples themselves were absent at the time. And hence the faith of this little company of Samaritans, while it would lay the foundation for the later success of the Apostles in that province, could have only a slight effect on the disciples who were present, and none at all upon the rest of the Jewish nation.

In the two miracles at Cana, the usual principle appears. Our Lord asserts his claim by actions only, while he rebukes those who were so backward to perceive the moral evidence, which attested his dignity. "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe."

In John v., the same rule of conduct is apparent, though partially modified. In the cure itself, our Lord studies privacy, as in the cures in Galilee. "He conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place." It is only when the miracle itself is charged as a crime, that our Lord resorts to a higher ground of vindication, and claims to be the Son of God, with an appeal to various proofs of his real dignity. His ministry had now lasted a whole year, and he was about to remain absent for eighteen months from Jerusalem. Without one public declaration of his claims in the holy city, our Lord could scarcely be said to have offered himself to the nation, as their promised King and Saviour. Having thus fulfilled all righteousness, he refrains, in the two next visits, from the same explicitness; so that the Jews surround him in the temple, at the Feast of Dedication, with the querulous appeal—"How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." In the only instance where St. John records his conduct in Galilee, it agrees perfectly with the descriptions in the earlier gospels. "When Jesus knew that they would come by force to make him a king, he departed again into the mountain himself alone." Even the discourse that followed served only to increase the doubts of the unprepared hearers, and confirmed their indecision, or awakened their disgust. And hence the fourth gospel harmonizes with the rest in

its description of our Lord's general conduct, while it reveals to us occasional exceptions, of which the reason, in each case, is not hard to understand, and which illustrate the still deeper harmony of truth that pervades the whole.

But this gospel also explains the motive, which prompted a line of conduct so peculiar. "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." It was the instinctive law of a perfect and unselfish humility, to let his works speak for themselves, and only to affirm his glorious dignity, where there were hearts prepared, by deep moral conviction, to receive the message. Thus alone could he gather around him a circle of true disciples, imbued with deep and genuine faith; while to have encouraged a spurious faith, that rested solely on his own bare assertion, would have been to lay the foundations of the church with hay and stubble. And hence the course which our Lord actually pursued, as revealed alike in all the four gospels, bears the stamp of true wisdom and of deep humility, and is one beam from that halo of Divine glory, which encircles the person and the life of the Son of God.

§ 5. THE VISITS TO NAZARETH.

The first event recorded in the earlier gospels, after our Lord's return to Galilee, is a visit to Nazareth, which was followed at once by a removal to Capernaum. Here, as in many other cases, the rash admissions of modern critics, from too low an estimate of the sacred writings, have paved the way for the assaults of open infidelity. Not only Schleiermacher, but Neander and Olshausen, have held this visit to be the same, which is mentioned by St. Matthew and St. Mark, not long before the Mission of the Twelve Apostles, and the last-named critic pronounces the opposite view clearly untenable. Starting from this admission, it has been easy for Strauss to prove the gospel narratives

inconsistent, not only in chronology, but in various details, and thus, at the outset of the evangelical history, to throw a dark shadow of doubt over its reality and faithfulness. But a closer attention to the text will dispel alike the false premise and falser conclusion; and we shall discover in the three accounts, when compared together, decisive marks of consistency and truth.

The following reasons have been offered for the sameness of the visits. The two scenes are too similar, to be prevented from mingling together. In both, the teaching of Jesus makes the same impression on the Nazarenes, of amazement at his wisdom. In both, there is an absence of miracles, and the maxim is uttered, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country. Each also, it is said, claims to be the first visit of the kind, since in both alike the Nazarenes express their astonishment at the suddenly revealed gifts of Jesus. If the visit in St. Luke had occurred before the other, such a repetition of their surprize is affirmed to be impossible.

In the face of these authorities, and their fancied demonstrations, it may be maintained with confidence that the two visits are distinct and successive. The reasons relied upon for an opposite view are either untrue in themselves, or totally inadequate; while the unforced narrative, as it stands, contains the strongest evidence of its historical reality.

1. First, if we allow that the Evangelists are neither ignorant nor fraudulent historians, the two visits are clearly distinct. For the one in St. Luke precedes the settled stay of Jesus at Capernaum, and accounts for the transfer of his residence from his early home to another town of Galilee. It has, in short, every feature that could indicate a formal opening of his Galilean ministry. But the visit in the two other gospels just as plainly follows the delivery of the parables, and the raising of the ruler's daughter, and precedes, only by a short interval, the mission,* or at least the return, of the Twelve Apostles. Now this last event is fixed by St. John to the approach of the third Passover.

Hence it follows that a year and a half, or one half the whole period of our Lord's ministry, lies between the two visits,—if the Evangelists have given each in its true place—a tolerably clear sign, one would think, that two different events must have been intended by the writers. To identify them must imply, not merely a slight irregularity, but a total confusion in one or all of the sacred narratives.

2. Next, all probability is in favour of a repeated visit. The ministry in Galilee lasted nearly two years and a half, without intermission, and included several circuits through the whole province. Is it credible that Nazareth should be visited once only, and that for little more than a single day? It was not the habit of our Lord to be so easily repulsed in His works of love. Even guilty Jerusalem, where his own danger, and the malice of his enemies were the greatest, had not less than five visits, and how can we suppose that Nazareth, his home for so many years, after one brief visit only, was resigned entirely to its unbelief?

3. Thirdly, the very resemblances, when closely examined, will be found illusive, and reveal features of real contrast. The first is the surprize of the Nazarenes at the wisdom of our Lord. But in reality, the causes assigned for their surprize in St. Luke, and in the two other gospels, are widely different. In one case, it is the bold claim of Messiahship, uttered in one brief sentence, in the other, the wisdom displayed in a course of public teaching. The fancied similarity is thus nothing else than a total contrast, and might suffice, almost alone, to discriminate the two events, which it has been, with great rashness, made an excuse for confounding together.

The other point of resemblance, which has been insisted on, is the saying of our Lord, on the light esteem of a prophet in his own country. Here, if the words had been the very same, since the truth would be equally applicable on a first or a second visit, they could form no real proof of identity between the two events. But this resemblance, also, discloses a real contrast.

In St. Luke the statement is simply negative—"No prophet is accepted in his own country." But in the two accounts of the later visit, which occurred after the fame of Jesus had been widely spread throughout Galilee and Palestine, it is altered into a positive affirmation. "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his kindred, and in his father's house." The contrast is exactly such as might be expected, if the former visit was at the very opening of his public ministry, and the latter half-way in its course, when his name had gained the highest degree of publicity, so that even the tetrarch was led to say—"It is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him."

4. But if the fancied points of resemblance prove to be real contrasts, the other marks of difference are not less complete. On the former visit, no miracle whatever was wrought. It is not a mere omission in the record, which might be supplied by conjecture, so as to reconcile the two statements, but they are positively excluded by the very nature of the event. Our Lord was violently expelled from the town, and his life threatened, because he forebore to work any miracle, in compliance with an unbelieving curiosity. In the later visit several miracles of healing were wrought, though few only, compared with those in other places. Again, in St. Luke, the discourse in the synagogue was followed at once by a violent expulsion from the city, and the consequent removal to Capernaum; while in St. Matthew and St. Mark, the public teaching leads, first, to surprise at his wisdom, then to a few cures, and lastly to a course of instruction in the neighbouring villages.

5. A further reason for the distinctness of the visits may be found in the context of the two earlier gospels. For we there read that the mother and brethren of Jesus had sought to see him, not long before. Their motive for seeking this interview is not stated, but none is more probable, than to express their desire that he should visit Nazareth once again; where the growing fame of Jesus, and calmer thoughts upon their own

unworthy and violent conduct, must have produced a strong re-action, at least of curiosity and wonder, if of no higher and better feeling. A year and a half would now have elapsed since the first visit, and the growing reports of the works of Jesus could not fail to awaken a strong desire for a fuller acquaintance with his teaching, from the inhabitants of his own city.

6. Another and last proof that the visits were quite distinct may be found in the altered tone of the Nazarenes. Before, it was one of simple doubt and incredulity—"Is not this Joseph's son?" with the evident implication—"How is it possible that his pretensions can be true, or that one so mean in his origin can be a great prophet, much less, the Messiah of God?" But on his return, when his fame was already established, although the spirit of unbelief is powerful as ever, it is driven inward by stubborn facts, and compelled to content itself with the language of wonder and perplexity. "Whence hath this man these things, and what wisdom is this which is given him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?" There is here a reluctant admission of his extraordinary powers, as a teacher and prophet of no ordinary kind, while their spirit is just as incredulous as ever; and instead of rejoicing in the fact, and welcoming the blessing, they merely perplex themselves with the inquiry—"How can these things be?"

It is affirmed, however, by Schleiermacher, and Strauss adopts the remark as conclusive, that the Nazarenes could never have inquired, "Whence hath this man this wisdom," if the visit in St. Luke had occurred previously, since they must have had proof on that point on the former occasion. But the assertion is groundless in the extreme. There was nothing whatever in that brief claim of Messiahship, followed at once by their open violence, which could solve their present difficulty, since it arose from the union of eminent gifts and powers, now beyond the possibility of denial, with an origin and education so obscure. How could a statement, which they did not believe when made, and which was confirmed by no outward sign, because of their

unbelief, remove their later perplexity, when the proofs of his prophetic character were plain and irresistible ?

To conclude, every feature in the two visits is different, except the surprize of the Nazarenes, and the reference to the usual treatment of a prophet in his own country ; while the surprize itself is ascribed to distinct causes, incompatible with each other, and the allusion to a prophet's reception is also varied, so as to imply the fame of our Lord, at the later visit, throughout all the rest of Galilee. When, on the strength of such evidence as this, writers like Neander and Olshausen bring in the Evangelists guilty of error and confusion, amidst such a school of criticism the birth of the mythical theory, in its wildest extravagance, can awaken little surprize.

A further objection has been urged against St. Luke's account, from the allusion of the Nazarenes to previous cures, wrought at Capernaum. If our Lord had not yet begun his residence there, how could the report of such works, wrought in that place, have reached Nazareth ? But this seeming difficulty is only a secret coincidence, the veiled harmony of historical truth. For we learn from the fourth gospel that Jesus returned, first of all, to Cana, and while still absent from Capernaum, had healed the son of a nobleman in that town, which led to the conversion of the whole family. Here, then, was a miracle of healing, such as the Nazarenes desired, of a very public nature, and wrought at Capernaum, before any such favour had been shewn to Nazareth. The plural form, like the language of the Samaritan woman—"Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did," is due simply to the vague amplification of a popular appeal ; while the fact, recorded in an entirely different connexion by St. John, removes the whole difficulty, and converts it into a powerful sign of consistency and truth.

We may conclude, further, from the record in the gospels of these two visits to Nazareth, one before the abode at Capernaum, and the other, towards the close of the second year in our Lord's ministry, and each of them attended with such distinct and con-

sistent details, a speedy and angry expulsion, and a state of astonishment and perplexity, the refusal of all miracles, and the performance of a few cures only, an instant removal to Capernaum, and a short circuit of teaching through the villages around Nazareth, the exclusive mention of his reputed father in one case, and in the other, of his brethren, and mother and sisters, and these last, as actually living among them ; that reality is too deeply impressed on the whole narrative, and proofs of accurate knowledge too clearly afforded by the writers, to be melted away in the nineteenth century by the bold impiety of the mythical theorist. Such clear, consistent narrative can never be set aside by the loose fancies of a school of criticism, which would degrade the gospels into a cento of loose traditional fragments, on the warrant of assertions opposed equally to truth and common sense.

§ 6. THE CALL OF THE FOUR DISCIPLES.

The ministry of our Lord in Galilee, according to St. Matthew and St. Mark, was prefaced by the call of the four disciples, Peter and Andrew, James and John, while fishing by the sea of Tiberias. St. Luke mentions either the same, or a very similar event, and connects it with a remarkable miracle of our Lord, the draught of fishes. St. John, however, makes the intimacy of these disciples with Jesus to have begun earlier, before the previous Passover, and the return into Galilee. Opinions have been divided, whether St. Luke relates the same occurrence with St. Matthew, though most of the recent critics maintain its identity. The distinctness of the event in St. John is apparent, on the most cursory view. A double objection is here started by the advocates of the mythical hypothesis, that the history in Luke v., as well as the call in Matt. iv., and the miraculous draught in John xxi., are merely variations of the same legend, and that the account in the three earlier gospels is inconsistent

with that early intimacy of these disciples with Jesus, which is plainly affirmed by the fourth gospel.

These difficulties are best removed by reversing the order of inquiry. And first, it is self-evident from the gospels, that the miraculous draught in St. Luke, and in the fourth gospel, are two distinct events, and not mere varieties of the same history. Except the miracle itself, every circumstance is one of entire contrast. They differ in time, to the extent of two years and a half; in the number of disciples present, who were four in one case, and seven in the other; in the absence of Andrew, clearly implied in the fourth gospel; in the number of the vessels, two in St. Luke, and one in the later miracle; in the position of Jesus, in the ship, and on the shore; in the position of the disciples, two in each of two vessels, or seven in one—a contrast rendered more striking by the direct address of John to Peter in the second narrative; in the special direction, to launch out into the deep, or to cast the net on the right-side; in the result, the net remaining unbroken the second time only; and in the conduct of Peter, who falls down at the feet of Jesus in the vessel, the moment after the draught was made, or swims to him where he stood upon the shore. Thus no conjecture can be more palpably false, than that which asserts the sameness of the event in both gospels. Even on the legendary hypothesis, it would be far more reasonable to consider them as two distinct legends, framed expressly for the sake of contrast.

This difference, then, being plain, reflects light on the more debated question, whether the call in St. Matthew, and the draught in St. Luke, are versions of the same event, or distinct and successive. The interval, if we suppose each gospel to be regular, may be reckoned at nearly half a year. For the call in St. Matthew, is the preface to our Lord's public teaching at Capernaum, and to a circuit through the whole of Galilee; while the miraculous draught follows the close of that circuit, and only three events, the cures of the Leper and the Paralytic, and the call of Levi, are mentioned afterwards down to the close of the

first year. Hence, if each writer adheres to the order of time, the interval may be probably reckoned at half a year. Now if these disciples had accompanied our Lord through his first circuit, is it very unlikely, that, on his return to Capernaum, they would resume for a short time their first employment? The incident in the fourth gospel supplies a clear answer. For we learn that, even after our Lord's resurrection, and while they awaited his final instructions, the leading Apostles did not think it inconsistent to use their nets once more on the sea of Tiberias. The ordination of the Twelve was not until the early part of the second year, and until then, an express command would seem needful, to withdraw them altogether from their usual occupation. But the call in St. Matthew did not, of necessity, imply more than the duty of attending on that circuit which shortly followed, and a permanent companionship would need some further intimation from our Lord. Hence the summons in St. Luke, not by word, but by act, would be quite consistent with the fact that these disciples had been called to accompany Jesus through a former circuit.

The fact of two successive calls, with a previous intimacy recorded by St. John alone, removes another objection, which has been started against the gospels. For if the disciples had been attached to our Lord, both before and after the first Passover, and on his return to Galilee, it is easy to conceive that a bare word of Jesus would induce them to follow him again, since they were already convinced of his high claims, and had witnessed his miracles, both at Cana and in Jerusalem. The intercourse is divested of the legendary appearance, with which it has been charged, and is seen to be a gradually developed intimacy, confirmed by striking miracles, it is true, but still ripening, by a reasonable process, into the full assurance of Christian faith.

Two other reasons have been offered, to prove the sameness of the events. If they were distinct, why does only one of them appear in each gospel, and so nearly in the same connexion, as to be readily confounded together? But this difficulty vanishes,

on attending to the structure of the gospels, and the relations already proved to subsist between them. There were plainly two miraculous draughts, one early in the public ministry of our Lord, the other after his resurrection; two anointings, one in Galilee in the second year, the other in Bethany in the same week with the Crucifixion, by Mary the sister of Lazarus; two cleansings of the temple, one at the first, the other at the last Passover. Yet in each case only one event of the same kind appears in the same gospel. From the nature and length of our Lord's ministry, many discourses must have been spoken, and miracles wrought, nearly resembling each other, since three years were mainly occupied with missionary circuits throughout Galilee and Perea. Hence it is natural and reasonable to expect that a later Evangelist would sometimes omit the precise event recorded by his predecessors, and replace it by another of the same kind, marked, however, by some instructive variation. To mention both, in such cases, would tend to prolixity and weariness, while to exclude all change would render a new gospel almost worthless. It has been proved that St. Luke knew the two earlier gospels. And since he adheres closely to St. Mark in the account of the dispossession at Capernaum, and to both of them in the cure of Simon's mother-in-law, and the cures of that evening, the entire change, both in the order and the details, is a proof that he designed to record, in the miraculous draught, a later and distinct occurrence.

But the narrative, it is said, excludes all previous intimacy between the disciples and Jesus. The two ships are first mentioned without the names of their owners, and Simon is only named, when his boat has to be used. This proves, according to Schleiermacher, as well as Strauss, that they are described as mere strangers.

This objection, to those who believe the truth of the gospels, is destroyed at once by a reference to St. John's narrative. For it is plain, by comparison, that the disciples were already acquainted with Jesus, whether the event be the same as in St. Matthew, or

later and distinct. But apart from this decisive reason, and taking the ground of these critics, the context is enough to refute their assertion. In fact the writer has recorded the miraculous cure of Simon's wife's mother, only just six verses before. It is a mere evasion to pretend that these are two separate fragments, which St. Luke has inserted without alteration. The Evangelist was clearly not such a poor, careless compiler of patchwork, as to overlook what he had written within a dozen lines. The very hypothesis of such insertions is most preposterous, and is refuted by the simple fact that the writer agrees punctually with St. Mark, through fifty or sixty particulars, in the same order of time.

It has been further alleged by Strauss, that St. Matthew has placed the cure somewhat later, and hence that St. Luke has given it too early a date. But this is both an error in fact, and a mistake in argument. It is an error ; since the first gospel does not fix the date of the cure, while St. Mark and St. Luke have both of them defined it in the most exact and careful manner. And it is also futile ; since the argument does not depend on the real time of the cure, but on the purpose and meaning of St. Luke. He has recorded the cure, only six verses before the miraculous draught, and hence he plainly could not mean to leave the impression on his readers, that the intercourse of the disciples with Jesus begun with this event. Indeed the form of the narrative, on which such stress has been laid, and such rash conclusions rested, is explained entirely by the difference between an eye-witness and personal companion of these Apostles, and a general historian.

But the account itself implies a previous intimacy. From the first, Simon lends his ship to Jesus, implicitly obeys his instructions, calls him Master, and lets down the nets at his bidding, though the whole night has been spent in useless toil. The title also, Simon Peter, reminds us that the writer assumes a previous knowledge, on the part of his readers, of several events, which his own gospel does not record.

It is objected, further, that the miracle served no apparent

object, and was adapted to produce only a superstitious fear. How little faith, it is said, must Jesus have had in the force of mind and truth, and how mean must have been his estimate of Peter, who clung to him afterwards, not because of his miracles, but for the words of eternal life. A marvellous objection, well worthy of those children in the market-places of criticism, whom our Lord has described in his expressive parable! If miracles are withheld, how absurd to believe a revelation without evidence! If they are wrought, how little faith they must imply in the unaided force of truth! To every mind of common sense or right feeling, the miracle had the highest and worthiest object, to awaken a deep conviction of the Divine power and holiness of the Lord; and the narrative shews that this object was amply fulfilled. No benefit can be greater, to any child of man, than to be freed from that shallow self-conceit, which forms the essence of unbelieving philosophy, and to be raised into a state of humble and holy reverence, for the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of the Son of God.

But a further contradiction has been affirmed to exist between the accounts of the two first and of the fourth gospels. Nothing, it is said, can more directly counteract the intention of those writers, than to suppose a previous acquaintance between Jesus and the brethren. In both gospels, great stress is laid on the fact that they immediately left their nets; the writers therefore deemed this something extraordinary, which it certainly was not, if they had been previously in his train. The point of the narrative lies in the prophetic spirit ascribed to Jesus, who selected at the first glance the right individuals, not needing that any should testify of man.

These remarks are a striking instance of the perverse criticisms by which the truth of the word of God has been recently assailed. The two Evangelists merely state that our Lord called these four disciples, while he walked by the sea of Galilee, and that they immediately followed him. There is not one word, either to affirm or deny their previous acquaintance. Why then,

are they said to exclude it by their statement? Simply because their narrative is thus made to contradict the fourth gospel, and itself assumes a more unreal and legendary appearance. We have only to reverse the steps of this perverse argument, and it will yield us a direct evidence of internal consistency and truth. It results plainly, from the fourth gospel, that these disciples had accompanied our Lord for one or two months at least before their call by the sea of Galilee. And hence their prompt obedience no longer appears a strange and unnatural step, a miraculous control of the human will, but the reasonable effect of their growing reverence for the Lord Jesus, concurring with the secret power of his Divine vocation. The very word, which has been quoted to disprove this view of their conduct, yields distinct evidence in its favour. If the disciples had never met with Jesus before, their obedience would have been striking, and almost miraculous, though attended with some delay. But since they had already been his companions for a time, the gospels lay the whole stress upon the promptness of their obedience, since this was the feature of their conduct, which alone could awaken a reasonable surprise, and by which our Lord proved his power over the hearts of men.

It is further argued that the words, "Come after me," are explained to mean, in the earlier gospels, that the disciples thenceforth constantly followed Jesus, and hence that consistency requires the same meaning to be ascribed to them in St. John. And this is said to be confirmed by the plainest indications, since from the time of this occurrence, Jesus always is found in company with his disciples. (ii. 2, 17; iii. 22; iv. 8, 27.) Even if they had parted from him for a time, they could not have become such complete strangers, as the other narrative implies; nor would Jesus, after affixing to Simon the surname Cephas, have merely called him afterwards, in common with the others, to be a fisher of men.

A simple perusal of the context will destroy the parallel, on which reliance is placed, and thus reveal the entire harmony of

the gospels. The words in St. Matthew and St. Mark were uttered, when our Lord was in Galilee, and his public ministry in the province was begun. Their purpose was therefore, very plainly, to invite these disciples to be his companions in the public work on which he was actually entered. But, at the time to which the fourth gospel refers, the public ministry was not even begun; and the call is expressly accounted for by the fact, that our Lord was still on the banks of Jordan, and desired Philip to accompany him on his return to Galilee. Now this was a journey which Philip would have made, even if no invitation had been given. The words were a call to personal intercourse with Jesus, but could hardly have been understood as a command, that the disciples should thenceforth abandon their usual occupations. They are described, in the two next chapters, as present with Jesus; for the simple reason, that the purpose of the writer was to describe events, of which he was himself an eye-witness, and hence he suspends his narrative, as soon as he reaches the point of time at which their absence began, and leaves our Lord, not at Capernaum, but in Cana of Galilee.

The objection, from the surname Cephas, given to Simon, is superficial and untrue. For our Lord, in John i. 42, does not impose that surname, but only predicts its future and current application to the Apostle in the Church of Christ. The name was significant of a character, to be afterwards acquired. It began to be imposed, when that character was actually gained, and became universal in the Church, when the same character had been fully and widely manifested. The prophecy, therefore, is strictly in keeping with the whole history, and could only have fulfilled its purpose, as a sign of our Lord's prophetic wisdom, by occurring very early in the narrative, just as it appears in the fourth gospel.

On the other hand, it may be affirmed with truth, that the new facts, revealed by St. John, throw a clearer light on the statements of the other gospels, and reveal a gradual and beautiful progress, in the history of these disciples. They are first led

to join our Lord by the voice of the Baptist, and Simon and Nathanael receive a double sign of Messiah's knowledge, one relating to the past, and the other to the future. They attend him on his return to Galilee, which was their home, and on his visit to the Passover, which, as Jews, they were bound to attend. They stay with him for a little time, and baptize in his name on the banks of Jordan, but when they return to Galilee, their vocation seems to be fulfilled. He calls them, however, from their common work as fishermen, and they attend him once more on his first circuit throughout Galilee. Again, on returning to Capernaum, they resume their work for a short time, when a miracle, joined with a promise, still more expressive than the former call, invites them to be his daily companions once more. From this time there is no trace of a separation, and a few months later, at the opening of the second year, the twelve are formally set apart to be his companions and messengers. Once again they resume their work, after the resurrection, while waiting for his public appearance, and are again reminded by a second miracle, more striking than even the first, of their solemn and lasting vocation to be the Divinely appointed fishers of men.

§ 7. THE CALL OF MATTHEW.

This event, like the call of the Four Disciples, has had its reality assailed, on the ground of a fancied inconsistency between the gospels. St. Mark and St. Luke substitute for Matthew the name of Levi, while Matthew still is found in their list of the Apostles. Hence Sieffert, and even Neander, suppose that two distinct persons are designed, a hypothesis which Olshausen, with more reason, rejects as untenable.

It is asserted by the objectors, that St. Mark and St. Luke give us no sign whatever of Levi the publican and the Apostle Matthew being the same person, though several double names

occur in their lists of the twelve ; next, that they omit the title, *publican*, a further proof that they do not suppose Matthew and Levi to be the same ; and thirdly, that the abrupt call from the receipt of custom is unnatural and legendary. Further, it is alleged to be unlikely that the publican would have a great feast in readiness the same day, or that the account in the first gospel, if Matthew were indeed the writer, would be less distinct and graphic than in the two others. Another difficulty is raised as to the parties with whom the question upon fasting arose.

A careful inquiry will remove all these objections. And first, there is no passage where the verbal resemblance of the gospels is more striking, so as to prove that the Evangelists knew each other's writings, and that St. Mark was later than St. Matthew, and St. Luke later than both. The variation could not be accidental, but must have been the result of design, and it remains to discover what the real purpose could be.

Now the first gospel not only identifies the Apostle Matthew with the publican, who was called from the receipt of custom, but lays an emphasis on the odious nature of the publican's office, in order to magnify the grace of Christ. Only here is the opprobrious epithet added, even in the list of the Apostles, while no similar addition occurs in the case of the other eleven. Thus the call of the publican, the discourse that followed, the allusions to this class of men in the Sermon on the Mount, and the epithet in the Apostolic list, all conspire to deepen our impression of Matthew's unworthiness, and the signal grace which numbered a despised publican among the twelve Apostles. If St. Matthew himself was the writer, who is so dull as not to see a special beauty in these minute features of the narrative ? Like St. Paul, he silently presents himself to his readers, as a special illustration of the grace of the Lord Jesus.

In the two other gospels an opposite purpose may be discovered. St. Mark follows the first gospel with an exact and verbal agreement, except in the name. Why, then, should a different name be used ? It is clear, from all the lists, that the

Apostle was known in the church by the name of Matthew, and we may infer that, if he had once been known by another name, it had been long disused. The substitution of a new name, both in the Old and New Testament, has plainly a moral significance, and is often the external sign of a new character. And hence, if St. Matthew was specially careful to note his own identity with the despised publican, who had once sat at the receipt of custom, it might be equally suitable for the other Evangelists, who were not Apostles, to imply, by the very form of their narrative, the complete change which had passed upon the publican, when he was numbered among the Apostles of the Lord. With this view, they might retain his original name in the history of the call, and the altered name alone in the list of the Apostles. By this change the general lesson, of the grace of Christ to the publicans, is retained; while the special grace shewn to the Apostle Matthew, who was promoted out of that hated class to such peculiar honour, is left, with great moral propriety, to be taught us by that Apostle alone.

But it is said that the call is too abrupt and violent, to be a real event. The perusal of the context proves the objection to be worthless. A teacher who had manifested such power, and wrought such miracles, as Jesus had done, made no extravagant demand, when he called a believing Jew from his earthly employment, in order to accompany him in his works of love. His doctrine would never have had such power, in after-times, to mould the world's history, if his own living voice had been so powerless as the objection would assume. A substitute was probably at hand, while some present sacrifice was required in all the Apostles, and was the test of their moral fitness for so high a calling.

But it is thought strange that the publican should have a feast in readiness for Jesus that very day, while a delay until the morrow is said to contradict the narrative, especially in the two first gospels. The plain fact, however, is that none of the gospels fix the day when the feast was given, while the first has

even left it uncertain, whether it were held in the publican's house, or were a common meal in our Lord's more usual residence. It is the third gospel alone, which reveals clearly that it was a special entertainment, given by the publican himself, and here the time is evidently left indefinite. It is reasonable to suppose that the delay was short, but there is not one word to decide whether it took place after a week's interval, or on the very day of the call; while if the call took place in the morning, the space would surely be enough, before night, to provide an ample feast. An objection so frivolous only shews the desperate efforts which have been made, to brand the word of God with inconsistency and falsehood.

The question about fasting has given rise to other criticisms, at once foolish and profane. According to Schleiermacher the first gospel here betrays the confusing emendations of a second editor, who did not understand how the Pharisees could appeal to the disciples of John. According to Strauss, however, the first gospel merely connects two events, distinct in point of time; while the third gospel has the worse fault of confounding them together, since a reply to Pharisees would have been more severe. But the true origin of both these charges is a misinterpretation of the third gospel. Of the two questions, Luke v. 30, 33, the former is ascribed to the Pharisees, but the latter has no such limitation. The pronoun might refer, with equal propriety, to the company in general, or to the parties who had just spoken; but the distinct mention, in the inquiry, of the disciples of the Pharisees, seems to exclude the latter, and establish the former meaning. If we suppose that some disciples of John put the question, as it stands in St. Mark, we have a key to the briefer phrase in St. Matthew, as well as to the statement of the two other gospels. An ear-witness would instinctively associate the known character of the inquirers with the words of their request; while a later historian would, just as naturally, distinguish them from each other, and his account, though less vivid, would be more verbally exact.

But if the feast was held in the house of the publican, how could the Pharisees raise their cavil—Why eateth your master, &c. without lying open to the same charge, and insulting the host who was entertaining them? This difficulty is soon removed, for the gospels do not tell us that these Pharisees partook of the feast. It is rather implied that they were mere spectators, and were holding one of their fasts at that very time. In this way the connexion between the feast, and the inquiry that followed, receives its most natural explanation.

Indeed the very feature, which has given rise to these objections, confirms the truth and authenticity of the narrative. There is a plain contrast between the elliptical brevity of the first, and the distinct and full statement of the third gospel. How natural it would be for Matthew himself to use the briefer phrase—"As Jesus sat at meat in the house," and while intent only on recording the gracious words of his Lord, to pass by in silence the proof of his own gratitude and liberal hospitality, which another Evangelist, writing afterwards, has brought out in bold relief. And again, when the second gospel retains the very words of the first, but varies the name, and adds also the name of the publican's father, we have a sign of intimate knowledge on the part of the writer, so simple and natural, as to exclude any reasonable suspicion of mere artifice. Again, the incidental allusion to the ascetic practices of the Pharisees, and of John's disciples, is so agreeable in one case to external testimony, and in the other, to the indirect teaching of the New Testament, as to become another pledge of historical truth. Finally, the early place of St. Matthew among the Apostles, following the six whose acquaintance with Jesus is placed by St. John before the first Passover, agrees well with the prominence given to his call by three of the Evangelists, and with the close resemblance which it bears, both in its character and its results, to the call of the four leading Apostles.

§ 8. THE EARLIER MIRACLES OF HEALING.

In the second and third gospels, four miraculous cures are noted, in the same order of time, during the first year of our Lord's ministry,—the dispossession in Capernaum, the cure of Peter's mother-in-law, the cleansing of the Leper, and the healing of the Paralytic. The last of these alone has been directly charged with bearing the marks of invention and falsehood, from the variation of the three Evangelists in their narrative. These objections must first be removed, before exhibiting the cumulative evidence of truth, which appears in the sequence of the four histories.

The three accounts of this cure, it has been objected, form an evident climax and gradation. St. Matthew is the simplest and least elaborate. St. Luke then adds one circumstance, that the bearers let down the sick man through the roof, by the customary opening; while St. Mark not only fixes their number, but makes them form a new aperture for the express purpose of letting down the Paralytic. This is said to be an extravagance, due merely to the invention of the writer, who sought to place in the strongest light the zeal and confidence of the bearers; and even the change in the third gospel must be explained in a similar way. Last of all, the simpler account of the first gospel must itself be rejected, as one invented to accord with Is. xxxv. 6, and the general current of Messianic expectation.

This hypothesis is refuted at once by the proofs, already given, that the third was later, and not earlier, than the second gospel. Indeed it is hardly possible to compare them in this very section, and not to perceive that, if one was derived from the other, it was in the reverse order to what the objection assumes. But the internal disproof of it, on other grounds, is not less complete.

First, the brief account of St. Matthew, though it gives few details, because the special purpose of the writer was to record

the discourses of Jesus, does imply the circumstance which is expressed by the other Evangelists. The words, "when Jesus saw their faith" must either imply a miraculous knowledge of their thoughts, or some overt sign, conspicuous to others. The former view would suit best with the purpose of a mere inventor of legends. The Evangelists, however, as faithful historians of real events, give the latter explanation, and thus expound the statement of the first gospel in a simple and reasonable manner, adopting the alternative which is furthest removed from all suspicion of a legendary origin.

In the next place, there is no difference between the two later gospels, in their description of the event. If St. Mark declares that the bearers uncovered part of the roof, St. Luke states, as explicitly, that the Paralytic was let down through the tiling (*διὰ τῶν κεράμων*). The only distinction is that one gives the details more fully, as from the lips of an eye-witness, and the other in the briefer style of general history.

The two statements are not only consistent with each other, but with eastern custom. The flat roofs of houses in the East, according to travellers, are covered with cement, and not with tiles. But the opening of the roof must of course have had a separate roof of its own, like the hatchway of a ship, for which tiles would probably be in general use. The lateral entrance would be too narrow for the descent of a patient; or rather, it would be unsuitable to the mode in which the Paralytic was to be let down. Hence the bearers removed the tiles from the upper part of the opening, so as to lower the bed, vertically, into the room below. To say that St. Mark speaks of a fresh opening in the body of the roof, because otherwise the man could not be let down before Jesus, unless he stood accidentally under the door of the roof, is a curious specimen of the follies which have been uttered in the name of searching and philosophical criticism. The gospels both concur that the tiling was removed; which would convey a clear meaning to all who were familiar with the structure of eastern houses, namely, that the

secondary roof was uncovered, so as to convert the lateral into a vertical opening.

St. Matthew, intent on recording the gracious words of Jesus, merely notes in passing that there was some peculiar sign of faith on the part of the bearers, but leaves its nature unexplained. St. Mark, under the instruction, or adopting the oral descriptions of St. Peter, who was present, explains the elliptical phrase of the first gospel. He mentions the occasion of the event, in the return of Jesus to Capernaum after a considerable absence; describes minutely the gathering in the house, and around the door, and the employment of Jesus, in preaching the word; relates the approach of the bearers, and specifies their number, and that they were unable to draw near because of the crowd. Lastly, he describes the uncovering of the roof, the overt act of faith alluded to by St. Matthew, and then continues the account almost in the words of the first gospel. St. Luke retains the same details, but moulds them into a form more adapted for general history. He mentions, first, the employment of our Lord, and then the presence of Pharisees and lawyers from many places, a fact essential to the narrative, but which comes out incidentally in the two other gospels. He then adds a statement, which indicates the later composition of his work—"The power of the Lord was present to heal them." This doctrinal title is never given to Jesus in the narratives of the two earlier gospels, and naturally became more frequent, when fewer eye-witnesses remained, who had seen our Lord in the days of his flesh; since Jesus is the only name by which he was then familiarly known. St. Luke then specifies the ascent of the bearers upon the roof, which St. Mark implies, but omits all further detail beyond the simple fact, that the couch was let down through the tiling before Jesus. At the close of the account, he seems to follow the words of the second gospel, and to modify them into a more classical form. Thus, instead of *ὥστε ἐξίστασθαι πάντας* we have the equivalent *ἐκστασις ἔλαβεν ἅπαντας*; and instead of the more vague expres-

sion “*ὁυδέποτε ὡτῶς ἔιδομεν*,” the more characteristic phrase, “*ἔιδομεν παράδοξα σήμερον*.” The comparison, then, of the accounts in the three gospels, only establishes their truth and consistency.

But the proofs of reality are multiplied, when we extend our view to the four miracles, and the connexion in which they stand, both in the second and third gospels. In each of them, the cure of Simon’s wife’s mother follows the dispossession in the synagogue, and occurs on the same Sabbath. After this ensue the numerous cures in the same evening, which St. Matthew also names, while the other gospels supply an explanation of the fact he records, since the Jews thought even cures unlawful on the Sabbath-day. Then follows a circuit throughout Galilee, the cure of the Leper, and a second retirement into solitary places, before the return to Capernaum, and the cure of the Paralytic. It is true that, in St. Matthew, this connexion does not appear, since the dispossession is not mentioned, and the cure of Simon’s mother-in-law, with other events, is placed between the cures of the Paralytic and of the Leper. But this Evangelist has clearly delayed the mention of separate miracles, till he could exhibit fully, in the Sermon on the Mount, the nature of our Lord’s teaching, and he consequently gives the cure without any link of close connexion, that could fix the order of time. St. Mark, in restoring it to its true place, has carefully noted the event which came just before, and those which immediately followed; and his narrative of the four miracles, thus agreeing in every point with St. Luke, has all the marks of accurate and continuous history.

But the accounts contain other pledges of their own truth. The first cure is said to have taken place in the public synagogue, and the fame of it to have spread through all the district. The second gospel was probably written about twenty,—the third, about twenty-four years, after the event. But even allowing thirty-five years, when the later of them must have been written, thousands would be alive, who were present, or heard of the miracle

that same day, if it really occurred. To publish such a fiction, at such a time, considering the malice of the Jews, would have been a sure way to discredit the gospel, and to brand it with the fatal reproach of imposture and wilful falsehood. The next cure has every feature which could prove its reality. It was wrought on Peter's mother-in-law, and we learn, in passing, from St. Paul, that this Apostle was known to all Christians as a married man. The spectators are named, Simon and Andrew, James and John. The time was a Sabbath evening, after the synagogue worship, and before sunset. The events that followed the same evening are recounted, with the pen of an eye-witness—that all the city was gathered at the door, while the retirement of Jesus for prayer, before day break, the pursuit of Simon, the popular eagerness, and the reply of our Lord, have the same stamp of reality, and are recorded alike in both gospels. The occasion for the cure of the Paralytic, in the return to Capernaum, and the subsequent call of the Publican, complete the many features of historical accuracy and minute information, which mark the whole course of the narrative.

§ 9. THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

This celebrated discourse, which stands in the opening of the first gospel, has been regarded, by most recent critics, as a different report of the Sermon, which St. Luke has placed after the Ordination of the Twelve Apostles, and considerably later in the history. Starting from this assumed identity, the mythical theorists have brought many objections, to disparage the truth of both accounts, and justify the bold expedient of transferring the whole, or nearly the whole, into the domain of mere legend. The same opinion has led other writers, as Neander and Olshausen, to represent the discourse in St. Matthew as being, to a great extent, an artificial compilation, where many sayings

are transferred from their actual historical context, in order to give a seeming completeness to the composition.

Now it is clear that, if the discourse is one and the same, great liberties, either of omission or interpolation, with great varieties of arrangement in the details, have been taken by one or both of the Evangelists. And conversely, whatever proves the unity and connexion of each discourse, as it now stands, will also evince them to be distinct and successive, and dissipate the objections which have arisen from confounding two different events together.

The differences which meet our eye at the first view, are certainly striking. The discourse in St. Matthew seems placed at the close of the first circuit of Galilee, or early in our Lord's ministry, while that in St. Luke is definitely fixed to the second year, some time after the second Passover, and immediately after the ordination of the Twelve Apostles. Both are delivered near Capernaum, and after an ascent into the mountain; but in one case our Lord re-descends to the plain, or at least to some level place, in the other this is not mentioned; in one case he is seated, in the other he is standing; while the length of each discourse answers to this distinction, since the former contains a hundred and seven, the latter only thirty verses. The events that follow are ambiguous, and seem to lend equal countenance to either view. For the next event, in St. Matthew, is the healing of the leper, which St. Luke places immediately after the miraculous draught, and plainly in the course of the first year, while the next but one is the healing of the Centurion's servant, the very event which follows the discourse in St. Luke. Both commence with several beatitudes, and close with the same illustration, of the two houses built on the rock and on the sand; while the intermediate lessons, on the love of enemies, and forbearance in judgment, have the same relative order in both gospels.

It is this partial resemblance in their contents, so that five or six clauses are almost verbally the same, which forms the chief

reason for affirming their identity. But the force of the argument is much diminished, when we reflect on the nature of our Lord's public ministry. In the course of three years, spent in various places, and in circuits through Galilee, a frequent inculcation of the same truths, and often in the same words, would only be a dictate of the highest wisdom. Each occasion would probably suggest some slight variety, either in the context or the form of the expressions thus repeated; but the repetition itself would be a constant and essential feature of such a ministry. In fact, all the recorded discourses, if taken as distinct, would require ten hours, at the most, for successive and deliberate utterance. If, then, some repetitions plainly occur, even in these brief extracts from the whole amount of teaching spread over three years, it is morally certain that such repetitions would be far more numerous in a full report of the whole, given with minute historical accuracy. And hence, assuming only a competent knowledge, it is probable that two different writers would prefer to select different occasions, on which sayings or discourses, having a partial resemblance, were uttered.

In the present instance, each discourse, if we leave it in its natural place, followed a distinct circuit. The Sermon in St. Matthew would be at the close of the first circuit of Galilee, and that in St. Luke, would follow a partial circuit around the sea of Galilee, Mark iii. 7—14, and preceded a journey to a distant part of Galilee the next day. The assembly, at this interval of almost a year, would be only in part the same, and a partial repetition of precepts, already given under similar circumstances, cannot be thought either unnatural or surprizing.

I. It has been urged, not only by Strauss, but by Neander and Olshausen, that a great part of the Sermon in St. Matthew has either no connexion, or one purely artificial, and due to the Evangelist alone. The connection of the phrases, it is said, is often such, as to make it highly improbable that our Lord should have so passed from one idea to another. According to Neander, the passages v. 23—26, 29, 30, and the Lord's prayer, are trans-

ferred from later discourses of Jesus, as given in St. Luke, as are also vi. 19—34, and vii. 5—11. Carrying these admissions still further, Strauss maintains that, after vi. 19, no connexion can be traced, that the apophthegm on earthly treasures, and on the two masters, have no unity with their context, that vii. 6, is equally unconnected, and also the final statement, of our duty to our neighbour, in the twelfth verse.

In opposition to these fancies, the following remarks may prove the integrity of the discourse, as it is given in the gospel.

1. First, the Evangelist directly asserts that the Sermon was delivered as one connected whole. Besides the formal introduction, he adds at the close—"It came to pass when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine ; for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." No words could teach us more plainly that, in the view of the writer, the whole was uttered before the descent from the mountain, and that he did not intend to offer us an artificial compilation. The previous address—"Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them," will also be historically falsified, if the writer, of his one accord, has mixed other statements, to which the caution did not originally apply. We have thus a double pledge that he gives us the whole discourse, as the words of Jesus before he descended from the mountain, sealed with one common sanction in the warning at the close.

2. Next, the verse vii. 12, which has been alleged as one proof that the writer gives a mere compilation, is a powerful evidence for the unity of the whole discourse. If we compare it with v. 17, the parallelism is apparent. The body of the discourse begins with the caution—"Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets ; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." And then, after a series of instructions, enforcing and amplifying the true nature and scope of various Divine commandments, we have the summing up at the close—"Therefore all things, whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them ; *for this is the law and the prophets.*"

What can indicate more decisively that a real unity of purpose runs throughout the whole?

3. The opening and the peroration, which lie without these limits, have also a marked correspondence. The former begins with blessings and continues with exhortation; the latter begins with exhortation, and ends with warning. The former attracts the hearer by sevenfold blessings, in order to stir him up, by a double description of the Christian character, to diligence in works of love. The close exhibits, in four different forms, the contrast between the true and the false disciple. Thus love opens the whole appeal, and godly fear is the motive appealed to at the close. There is a unity of design, but a marked contrast of tone, between the preface and the peroration.

4. The intermediate portion, or body of the discourse, falls easily into three divisions. First, moral duties of the second table, or towards our neighbour, cleared from the false glosses of Pharisaic tradition, v. 17—48. Secondly, religious services, or duties to God, in contrast with formalism, eye-service, and covetousness, of the same false teachers, ch. vi. Thirdly, supplementary duties, of forbearance and spiritual discretion towards men, of earnest devotion towards God, which complete the former outline, and exhibit the refined features of Christian grace. And each of these has its own symmetry. Specific explanations of the commands against murder, adultery, divorce, perjury, and revenge, are crowned by an exhortation to the sum of all social duties, pure and perfect love, like that of our Father in heaven. Directions upon three main forms of religious service, alms, prayer, and fasting, are crowned, in like manner, by an exhortation to heavenly-mindedness, and filial confidence in God, so as to banish all distracting and hurtful anxiety about worldly things. The two contrasted duties, towards men, of charitable forbearance in judgment, and of spiritual wisdom and discernment, are followed by an earnest exhortation to believing prayer, as the great means of procuring good things, and therefore, as St. James afterwards expounds it, the grand remedy against the double sin of con-

tention and worldliness, and every kind of breach of the great law of love.

5. The first interpolation, charged on the Evangelist, is ch. v. 23—26. Yet the intimate connexion of these verses as they now stand, is very apparent, certainly not less so than in their later occurrence, as given by St. Luke. A similar remark applies to verses 29, 30. It is said that our Lord was speaking of mere legislation, not of self-discipline. But it is quite plain that he is enforcing the real width and fulness of the Divine law, in contrast to the restrictive glosses of Pharisaic tradition. The true law of duty forbids, not only actual adultery, but the indulgence of inward lust, and commands the sacrifice of things, in themselves lawful and valuable, if they become practically our tempters to sensual sin. Hence nothing can be more intimate than the connexion, or more complete than the harmony of the verses with the scope of the whole context.

6. The next passage, charged with interpolation, is the Lord's prayer; partly, from its recurrence in St. Luke, and partly, because the one purpose is said to be, the contrast between reality and appearance, and therefore an exposition of the nature of prayer would be misplaced. The former reason has no weight, since after more than two years, many disciples might be with our Lord, who had not been present at the discourse; and besides the prayer is here given as a general model, but there in answer to the request for a specific form, and the words of introduction strictly correspond to this difference. The second reason is not less erroneous. Since the duty of prayer was perverted, among the Jews, by two main errors, vain-glorious hypocrisy, and vain repetition, it was natural and reasonable that our Lord should warn his disciples against both evils, and, for this end, that he should give them a pattern of simplicity and earnest reality in their private devotions.

7. The whole passage vi. 19—34, has also been charged with interpolation, and its separate parts, according to Strauss, have no apparent connexion. But the real connexion of the whole is

clear to any spiritual mind. 'Seek a portion in heaven, and therefore sit loose from all worldly cares. If you maintain this single purpose, your course will be light and peace; if you are double-minded, and study to keep the world under the shew of religion, your soul will be left in darkness. No man can serve two masters, and these two opposites can therefore never be reconciled. If you serve God with your whole heart, he will care for you in all the wants of this life; therefore cultivate a heavenly mind, and entire confidence in his Fatherly love, dismissing all vain care about the trials which to-morrow may bring.' Thus, after rescuing special services of religion from their prevalent abuse, our Lord enforces the crowning duties, of a supreme regard to the glory of God, and to heavenly things. The climax here, and in the former chapter, is of the very same kind.

8. The caution in vii. 6, has also been charged with a want of connexion, as a proof that it was not really uttered, where it now stands. But, in reality, there is a connexion, practically very important; since a precept, which forbids a habit of censorious judgment, is guarded by another, which equally enjoins a discriminating regard to the moral state and character of men. This relation, which Bengel has seized with his usual terseness, vindicates fully the historical accuracy of the Evangelist in this instance. But even if the connexion of thought could not be traced, this would be no valid reason for denying the actual sequence. A discourse, marked by Divine authority, may approach to the character of a series of proverbs, each enforced by the dignity of the speaker, without any departure from historical probability.

It results, from this brief review, that the objections raised against the account of St. Matthew, from the structure of the discourse, are utterly groundless, and that its internal evidence conspires with his deliberate assertion, to prove that it was uttered by our Lord on one single occasion, and not compiled out of fragmentary sayings, throughout the course of his ministry.

And indeed, since the whole might be spoken, with great deliberation, in much less than an hour, there seems no reason whatever, beyond the restless spirit of critical innovation, for questioning the statement that the whole was really uttered at one time, in a formal and public address on the mountain near Capernaum.

II. Let us next examine the discourse in St. Luke, in order to determine whether it is merely the same which St. Matthew has given, in an abridged form,—or a distinct and later address. This question resolves itself into another, whether the differences arise from mere omission and a briefer and more compressed report, or from real modifications in the connexion, arrangement, and general tone.

1. First, it seems plain that an earlier discourse would probably have a more simple and didactic character, while the growing opposition to our Lord would lead him to exhibit the same truths, on a later occasion, with a plainer reference to the conflict between the friends and enemies of the gospel. Now this is precisely the contrast, which appears in the two discourses. One has the calm authority of the Lawgiver; the other, the earnest eloquence of the Great Reformer, engaged in a life and death struggle with prevailing and stubborn wickedness. Sententiousness marks the one, and intense cumulative energy of warning and exhortation is as conspicuous in the other.

2. The opening, in both, has a partial agreement, but the differences are very significant. Instead of eight beatitudes, we have only half the number, followed by as many denunciations. And these are not presented, as before, in an abstract, but in a concrete form. “Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.” “But woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation.” If the discourses were the same, it is equally inexplicable why St. Matthew should have omitted these woes, or why St. Luke should have added them, and the symmetry, in each case, confirms the historical correctness of both statements. Indeed Strauss and Schleiermacher feel this argument so strongly,

that they venture to ascribe the maledictions to "the inventive fertility of the writer of the third gospel." The former has suggested a special reason for such a forgery, to make Messiah resemble Moses, in the union of curses with blessings. But no reason could be less plausible, since this gospel, more than the two others, marks the contrast between the severity of the law, and the grace of the gospel, as when James and John requested that they might call down fire from heaven. The charge, then, is sustained by no evidence whatever, except the exigency of an erroneous criticism.

3. The next paragraph has been often viewed as an evidence that the version of the discourse, in this gospel, has great omissions. For clearly, if it be the same with the one in St. Matthew, all those expositions of the law, which form its leading feature, are here omitted, and the Evangelist passes at once to the precept of loving enemies, where there is a verbal correspondence, in one or two verses. The opening formula—"But I say unto you that hear"—has been supposed, by its abruptness, to intimate an hiatus of this kind. But a truer exposition seems to reverse this argument. The four blessings are addressed immediately to our Lord's disciples, who were listening around him. The answering maledictions were pronounced, not against the same persons, but against the absent opposers of the gospel, the self-righteous and wealthy unbelievers, whether Pharisees or Sadducees, who were so constantly present, in thought, to our Lord and his disciples. Having denounced the woes to which these enemies were exposed, our Lord returns at once to his disciples, and teaches them that even these enemies were not to be excluded from their earnest love. "Yet I say to you that hear, Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you," &c. On this view, not only is the intimate connexion apparent, but it becomes plain that the maledictions are a real part of the discourse, and essential to the transition in the words that follow. In St. Matthew, these words are introduced by a contrast between the message to the ancients—"Thou shalt hate thine

enemy," and the authority of our Lord himself—"But I ($\epsilon\gamma\omega$) say unto you." In St. Luke, the contrast lies between the absent enemies of the gospel, addressed just before, and the duty of our Lord's disciples, his actual hearers, towards those enemies.

Again, the whole arrangement of this paragraph is different in the two gospels. The verses on the non-resistance to evil, which precede in St. Matthew, here come after. The verse which comes near the close of the former discourse, on the rule of duty to others, is then adjoined. The double query, on love and salutations, are changed into a threefold question; on love, well-doing, and lending to others. But the original command is then repeated, and amplified, before the final application—"Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful." This direct transition to love, the substance of Christian Morality, the redoubled energy of the injunction, with the entirely new structure of the verses interposed, and the unity of the whole paragraph, seem distinctly to prove that we have here a real modification, in a later discourse, and not simply an abridgment.

4. The next paragraph furnishes a similar proof, that the discourses are not the same. For besides the entire omission of Matt. vi., which constitutes so large and integral a portion of the Sermon on the Mount, a parable is interposed, which does not appear at all in that Sermon, between two verses, the exact counterpart of Matt. vii., 1, 2, and verses 3, 4. There seems no sufficient explanation, why the writer should have introduced it here, in the heart of the discourse, rather than added it to other fragmentary sayings, except the admission that such was its true place; for its connexion is by no means apparent on a distant view. But on closer search, it forms a natural comment on the contrast between these brief lessons of grace, forbearance and love, and the old maxims of rigour and selfish pride, to which the people were accustomed in the teaching of the Pharisees. The disciples of such a school could never rise above their teachers' own level, but every faithful disciple of the Lord would

rise to the level of his own gracious, heavenly instructions. This spirit of grace is then contrasted with the censoriousness of hypocrites who are keenly alive to the faults of others, and insensible to their own. It seems, however, not improbable from the form of the statement, that some slight incident occurred, to interrupt the discourse, which our Lord resumed by means of this brief parable. The direct expostulation, in verse 46, when compared with the didactic and deliberate statement in Matt. vii. 21—23, is another sign of a later date, when the moral conflict with the open enemies and false disciples was already become more intense, and required a more pointed and personal style of denunciation and warning. Other smaller variations tend to establish the same conclusion. Thus, instead of the expression—"Men do not gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles," we have the varied statement—"Of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble grapes." Either form is in itself equally suitable to the design of the passage; and such a figure would be likely to be somewhat varied on a repeated use of it; while the writer of the third gospel, if purposely abridging the discourse in St. Matthew, would never make such a trifling change; and if he derived his own version from some other auditor, would not have varied so widely in the structure and arrangement.

If these conclusions, then, are established on firm evidence, the historical consistency, and perfect accuracy of the two accounts, will be capable of a full and decisive vindication. It is quite natural that such a full discourse as St. Matthew has given, expounding the moral code of the gospel, in contrast to the false traditions, hypocrisy and worldliness of the Pharisees, should have been delivered by our Lord at the close of the earliest circuit throughout Galilee. It is equally natural that, after a fresh stage in the development of his ministry, by the choice of the twelve, and at the beginning of their first journey along with him, in their collective capacity, as his chosen messengers, he should renew those instructions in a briefer and varied form, exhibiting more simply the rules of Christian duty, apart from

their contrast to the false glosses of the Jewish leaders, and enforcing them with a redoubled earnestness of practical exhortation. And if St. Luke was cognizant, as he naturally would be, of the earlier gospel, since a work so important to the church must have been widely known, soon after it was written, the very circumstance of the earlier and fuller discourse being recorded there, would be a reason for passing it by, amidst so much of other matter, while the partial resemblance of the later address, as well as its important peculiarities, would be reasons for inserting it in this later selection from our Lord's sayings. The statements common to both would thus be confirmed by two witnesses, while each gospel would avoid the appearance of tautology, and the Church be benefited by a varied exhibition of the great maxims of Christian morality.

§ 10. ON THE NARRATIVE STYLE OF THE FIRST GOSPEL.

It has been urged, by several modern critics, in disproof of the authenticity of St. Matthew's gospel, that the narrative is too deficient in detail and in dramatic life, to have been penned by an eye-witness. The writer of the third, and still more, of the second gospel, are said to be clearer and fuller in their style of narration. On the other hand, the indefinite descriptions of times, places, and persons, the wholesale statements, that Jesus went through all the cities and villages, and that they brought to him all sick people, with the bareness and brevity of many incidents, all resemble a record of events, long current in oral tradition, and thus deprived of all particular and distinctive features.

In the first place, it is clear from a simple inspection, that the leading object of this gospel was to place on record the discourses of our Lord, and that mere narrative is strictly subordinate, except in the eventful history of the Crucifixion. Three fifths of the gospel, from the temptation onward, are of this character,

and the narrative portion is actually less than in the much shorter gospel of St. Mark. It follows naturally that the writer, although he were an eye-witness, would study compression in the incidents, that he might better fulfil his main object, and give due relief and prominence to the discourses of Jesus. And this very feature is one proof of its early composition. The recollection of incidents might survive much longer, but an authentic record of the main discourses and sayings of their Lord, would soon be required by the growing numbers, and imperfect faith, of the Jewish converts. But as the distance of time increased, and the circle widened, there would be a thirst for more circumstantial details of the incidents and miracles, such as we see to be provided in the second gospel.

Viewed in this light, the brevity of narration in the first gospel could only disprove its authenticity, if it bore other traces of vagueness and uncertainty. But it will be found, in many instances, that the reverse is true, and that the later gospels merely develop a fact, which was implied in St. Matthew's narrative. And since this is a point of much importance, it may be well to establish it by an induction of particular examples, which convert the objection into a powerful evidence of authenticity.

1. First, at the very opening of our Lord's Galilean ministry, St. Matthew tells us briefly that, "leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum." Here a visit to Nazareth, and a departure from it, are implied to have taken place, before the course of public teaching began. This implied fact is distinctly recorded by St. Luke, who explains fully the immediate cause for this transfer of our Lord's ministry from Nazareth to Capernaum.

2. The generality of the description which follows iv. 23—25, is clearly explained by the purpose of the Evangelist, to introduce the Sermon on the Mount, at the close of the circuit, with the least delay. In the miracles that are next mentioned, after the cure of Peter's wife's mother, others are said to have been

cured, when the even was come. The accuracy of this detail is confirmed by the other gospels, which shew that the cure took place on a Sabbath, in consequence of which, the multitudes waited till the sun was set, and the Sabbath was ended, before applying for relief.

3. In the account which follows, before the stilling of the tempest, the first inquiry is referred to "a certain scribe." The incident is not recorded in the other gospels, for the similar event in St. Luke is plainly distinct. And hence the mention that this disciple was a scribe, since there is no allusion to the circumstance, either in the promise or in the reply, is merely an indirect and unsuspecting sign of the minute information of the Evangelist.

4. In the cure of the Paralytic, we have the brief statement, that Jesus saw the faith of those who brought him. The other gospels explain, what is here so evidently implied, that they had given an evident proof of their faith, by the manner in which they gained access to the presence of Jesus. And hence the absence, in this gospel, of details which the others supply, is not a sign of ignorance and dependance on vague tradition, but of familiar knowledge, which often makes details appear superfluous.

5. The indirect manner in which Matthew is introduced, in the account of his call, has been sometimes urged to prove that he was not the writer. But an opposite conclusion may be drawn from it, with greater reason. Since Matthew was one of the twelve, his name must have been familiar to all the believers in Palestine, at whatever date the gospel was written. Hence any third party would naturally introduce him, just as he introduces Simon and Andrew, James and John, as a person whose character was already known; but St. Matthew, with Christian modesty, represents himself to his readers, as one obscure and unknown, until the grace of Christ called him from his obscurity, and gave him an honourable place among his chief disciples. The brief allusion to the house where the feast was held, is another feature of the same kind, since we learn from the other

gospels, that it was his own house, in which he had gratefully prepared a feast for Jesus and his disciples. The indirect manner in which the list of the Apostles is introduced, has a similar explanation, when we remember that the writer was one of their number. St. Mark and St. Luke formally relate their appointment, but St. Matthew and St. John pass it by in silence.

6. The answer to John's messengers is prefaced briefly by the words—"Go, tell John the things which ye hear of and see." The writer thus implies the fact of a present exhibition of miracles, which he does not pause to describe, as being intent only on recording the discourse of Jesus. The later gospel of St. Luke confirms his accuracy by an explicit statement. "In the same hour Jesus cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits, and unto many that were blind he gave sight." What can more fully prove a writer's historical fidelity, than when his most indirect and passing allusions are proved, by other histories, to correspond with the facts themselves?

7. The account of the various incidents, when the parables were delivered, abounds in specific details. It was during the former discourse, on blasphemy, that "certain of the scribes and Pharisees answered, Master, we wish to see a sign from thee." It was during his answer to them, and address to the people, that "his mother and brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him." It was the same day, after this incident, that he went out of the house, and taught from the ship, while the people stood upon the shore. After the parable of the leaven, the multitudes were sent away, and Jesus with his disciples returned to the house, where three other parables were uttered. The gospel of St. Mark, while it confirms many of these details, adds another to complete them, that, Jesus-crossed over with his disciples, the same evening, to the other side of the sea of Galilee.

8. The account of the visit to Nazareth, however brief, betrays no signs of vague and uncertain information. The names of four brethren of Jesus are distinctly given, while the circumstance appears incidentally, that his sisters were actually settled in

that city. "Are not his sisters all here with us?" No brief allusion could speak more plainly for the knowledge of the writer, and the reality of the whole narrative.

9. With chap. xiv., a second main portion of the gospel begins, where the didactic purpose is less prominent, and the structure is simply historical and successive. The proofs of minute and intimate knowledge are here multiplied. It will be enough to single out a few examples only. The miracle of the loaves, and its sequel, are one of these. Its occasion, we are told, was the murder of the Baptist, and the tidings brought by the disciples of his burial. The scene of it was a solitary place on the east of the lake, and the time of the day, evening. The food multiplied was five loaves and two fishes; the number fed, five thousand men, besides women and children. The fragments left filled twelve baskets, the kind of basket being also specified. Then followed the stormy voyage of the disciples, and in the fourth watch of the night they saw Jesus walking to them on the sea. The whole incident that follows is unsurpassed for the simple and vivid style of the description, which may be said to bear the stamp of an eye-witness, almost in every word.

10. In the passages that follow, it will be enough to point out a few indications of the same kind, which imply a full knowledge of details on the part of the writer. The reply to the Pharisees is followed by the inquiry of the disciples, and then by a request, ascribed distinctly to Peter; which is a minute detail, not preserved in the other gospels. The departure to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, and the return to the sea of Galilee, imply the acquaintance of the writer with the local scenes of the ministry of Jesus. The second miracle of loaves is individualized, by that return from the coasts of Tyre which preceded it, the three days' fasting of the multitudes, the seven loaves distributed, the four thousand fed, and the seven baskets, distinct in kind, from the other (*σπυριδες*), which were filled with the fragments. Journeys are then recorded, across the sea to Magdala, and back again to the eastern side; then northward to the district of Cæsarea

Philippi, and after the scene of the transfiguration, back to Capernaum again. Other minute features are the single loaf, which the disciples had taken with them on their voyage, the double appeal to the former miracles, the praise and the rebuke of Peter, in quick succession, which are stated here only, the six days' interval before the vision, the posture of the suppliant father, the prediction of our Lord's sufferings, and the question about tribute, with the remarkable instructions which Peter received for procuring it. Finally, the repeated hints of a transfer in the scene of his ministry from Galilee to Judæa. Matt. xvii. 22; xix. 1, 2.

From a review of all these instances, it results that the writer of the first gospel, amidst his brevity of narration, has given clear signs of his intimate knowledge of the events he relates, and that the scepticism of some recent critics is a very illogical and hasty inference from the distinctive peculiarity of his style. In fact, an eye-witness, familiar with the scenes he narrates, and also with many others which he has forborne to mention, and intent mainly on recording the discourses of our Lord, would very naturally adopt this brief, suggestive mode of description; while a later historian would, just as naturally, be more explicit and full in those details, which readers at some distance from the scene of the events would require to have explained.

§ 11. THE CHOICE OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES.

The names of the Twelve Apostles are given four times in the New Testament, with only two or three slight variations, even in the order of their arrangement. St. Mark and St. Luke distinctly relate their ordination, which they place early in the second year of our Lord's ministry. And since the Apostles had constant intercourse with many thousands of Christians, at least for thirty years, and one of them is known to have survived until near the close of the first century, this double statement,

with regard to a fact so vital in the history of the church, so reasonable in itself, and free from a miraculous character, might seem to have been placed beyond the reach of contradiction. Even here, however, difficulties have been started, by Schleiermacher and Strauss, which require a brief notice.

The choice of the Apostles, according to St. Luke, was followed at once by a remarkable discourse, which many conceive to be the Sermon on the Mount. Now it is argued that no motive is discoverable, why the two events should be thus associated, since the discourse was not specially addressed to the Apostles, and they had no office to fulfil during its delivery. Neander affirms that if Luke vi. 13, be intended to recite the choosing of the Apostles, it is clear that it does so incidentally, and not in chronological succession—a remark flatly opposed to the words of the gospel, and which has not one particle of evidence to confirm it. A sentence could hardly be framed, so as to express more clearly the immediate sequence of the two events. The objection, brought against this direct succession, is utterly worthless. If no two events are allowed to be successive, until we can prove their connexion by abstract reasoning, what a revolution will be made in our views of history! No single fact could then be received as true, until we were able, on *a priori* grounds, to form a complete theory of the universe.

But the narrative of St. Luke does really furnish its own explanation. After the discourse, Jesus entered into Capernaum, set out the next day for Nain, and then made, along with the twelve disciples, a circuit through the cities and villages of Galilee, preaching the kingdom of God. Hence it seems to follow that their appointment took place at the latest opportunity of private retirement, before a general circuit, in which they were his companions, and which began in another part of Galilee. No time could thus be more suitable for the appointment, than the period to which St. Mark and St. Luke have both assigned it.

Again, it is affirmed that this appointment could not be a single, solemn act, since we are told elsewhere that six of them

were called, singly or in pairs, on separate occasions. The first call of the disciples, however, is clearly distinct, in the view of the sacred writers, from their formal ordination, when they received the name of Apostles. And this agrees with every lesson of common sense. Some time of probation was plainly natural, before they were formally distinguished from the rest of the disciples. The history, which places their Ordination about Pentecost, but their call at various points of time in the course of the previous year, is consistent with itself and with probability.

Again, the identity of Bartholomew and Nathanael is disputed, because they are linked, in the Book of Acts, with different Apostles; and others besides Bartholomew, are absent in the fourth gospel, any of whom, it is urged, might be as well identified with Nathanael. This is a curious instance of the sceptical eagerness to reject a truth, because it is commonly believed. The only other Apostles, omitted by name in St. John's gospel, are Matthew, James the Less, and Simon Zelotes. To suppose that Nathanael was Matthew the publican, or James the Lord's brother, is plainly absurd. And since the name and surname of Simon Zelotes are both given, while Nathanael is a name, and Bartholomew a patronymic, it must be clear that Nathanael is the same with Bartholomew, and not with Simon. The proof, from juxta-position in the lists, is equally clear. In the opening of the fourth gospel, Philip brings Nathanael to Jesus, and in its close, Nathanael and Thomas are joined together. Now in St. Matthew, Bartholomew is placed between Philip and Thomas, after Philip in St. Mark and St. Luke, and after Thomas in the book of Acts. How could the presumption, from the lists, be more complete, that Bartholomew and Nathanael are the same person?

Another difficulty relates to Judas the brother of James, who is called Thaddeus by St. Mark, and by St. Matthew, Lebbeus, whose surname is Thaddeus. Hence Schleiermacher supposes that Thaddeus died, or left the circle of the Apostles, in the life-

time of Jesus, and another took his place; while Strauss prefers the equally violent supposition, that the names of the less distinguished Apostles were supplied by varying and uncertain tradition. When we remember that St. Luke and the two other Evangelists wrote twenty years before the death of St. John, the desperate nature of this last conjecture is apparent. The usual view, which treats these as names of the same person, is justified by internal evidence. Seven of the twelve Apostles have two names put on record, and hence a double name for this Apostle has nothing improbable. Again, the later gospels of St. Luke and St. John, which agree in the name, Judas, add an epithet, to distinguish him from the traitor. Hence, in the life-time of Iscariot, the use of another name, if any such belonged to him, would be more convenient and usual in the Apostolic circle; and its adoption by the Apostle St. Matthew, and by St. Mark, who followed the guidance of St. Peter, is easily explained. St. Luke, who used other sources of information, and St. John, who wrote much later, would naturally prefer the name, by which the brother of James was familiarly known in later years.

§ 12. THE HEALING OF THE CENTURION'S SERVANT.

The truth of this miracle has been assailed by a double objection, from the discrepancy between the accounts in the first and third gospels, and its features of partial agreement with the narrative, in John iv., of the cure of the nobleman's son at Capernaum.

Three points of divergence are specified in the accounts of St. Matthew and St. Luke,—the nature of the disease, the connexion of the party with the centurion, and the mode of application for the cure. The last of these alone has any real weight. St. Matthew says that the person was “a paralytic, grievously tormented,” and St. Luke, that he was “sick and ready to die;” but there is no contradiction, unless it were true, which is plainly

false, that a severe paralysis is never attended with suffering and danger.

The second difference is not less imaginary. The word, *παῖς*, used by St. Matthew, may denote either a son or a servant; while St. Luke expressly states that it was "a servant of the centurion, who was dear to him." But this is a coincidence, and not a contradiction. The later gospel simply removes an unimportant ambiguity, by substituting a more definite for a doubtful term. This is clearly the true relation between the two narratives; for St. Luke, like St. Matthew, has used the word *παῖς*, in reporting the address of the centurion, and only expounds it in his introductory statement. The word is used seven times in the New Testament, with this meaning, and only five times for *son* or *child*, and then usually with reference to our Lord only. Hence there is really a complete harmony between the two statements.

The other difference is more serious. In St. Matthew the centurion seems to be present personally, and to make the request to our Lord, while in St. Luke he merely sends a message. Nearly all expositors agree that the latter statement is more exact, and the other a partial license, due to the customary brevity in the narratives of the first gospel. But a double objection is made, that St. Luke is inconsistent with himself, and the supposed license too great to be consistent with just interpretation, or faithful history.

The conduct of the centurion, it is objected, would be absurd and capricious, if he first sent for Jesus to come, and then sent again to forbid his coming. But the reply of Neander is very just, that this circumstance "has precisely the stamp of real life. The centurion at first, absorbed in his anxiety, sends for Christ to come to him; and afterward, when the fulfilment of his desire is at hand, the sense of his unworthiness, in comparison with the greatness of Christ, becomes prominent, and with it a sense of the impropriety of his request." The objection is thus a real and striking evidence of entire truthfulness in the narrative. It

may be added that the verbal resemblances, later in the chapter, prove the writer to have been cognizant of St. Matthew's gospel; and hence the very extent of the change, reaching the very limits of historical consistency, is a pledge, both of his competent knowledge, and of his strict regard to historical accuracy. The article further seems to imply, that there was only one synagogue at Capernaum, which had been built by this centurion; and hence is a token of the public notoriety of the miracle.

The other objection, from the license thus attributed to the first gospel, loses its force on a comparison with other passages, where we may observe the same studied compression of style. A similar case occurs in the next chapter, in the narrative of the ruler's daughter. Her death really took place *after* the first application of the ruler to Jesus, and was reported in a distinct message, though St. Matthew's words might lead us to suppose that it had already taken place at the time of the original request. The main object of this gospel being to record the discourses of our Lord, the writer, in the details of the miracles, seems repeatedly to have studied brevity, with substantial truth, rather than verbal and minute accuracy. A third instance, of the same kind, is found in the cure of the two blind men at Jericho. This studied compression, attended with a partial license of historical perspective, is one distinctive feature of the first gospel. Every variation, in the present instance, may be simply explained by this one principle alone, and results from the briefer mode of representation, in the first address of the centurion to Jesus. We may observe that another feature of moral propriety comes to light by the later details. The centurion was not present at the time when our Saviour uttered that high commendation—"I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."

It is urged, again, that the account in John iv. agrees with each of the other narratives in some points, where they disagree with one another, and hence ought fairly to be viewed as a third version of the same traditional fact. The resemblances are said to be these; the place of the cure, at Capernaum; the term *υἱος*,

in St. John, and $\pi\alpha\tilde{\iota}\varsigma$ in St. Matthew, the statement that the patient was about to die, in St. John and St. Luke, the similar mode of announcing the cure, in St. Matthew and St. John, and the embassy from the house, at the close of the narrative, in the third and fourth gospels. Of these the first amounts only to the fact of two cures being wrought at Capernaum, at just a year's interval. The second is illusive, since $\pi\alpha\tilde{\iota}\varsigma$ more commonly denotes *a servant* in the New Testament. Even in this very gospel, $\nu\tilde{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$ is used forty times, and $\pi\alpha\tilde{\iota}\varsigma$ only once with the same meaning. The imminent danger of the patient, and the similar announcement of the cure, are features likely to recur on many occasions, while the nature of the embassy is not the same, but a total contrast.

The differences are so numerous, as to render any attempt to confound the two events together, utterly fruitless. The interval of time, according to the gospels, was a whole year, since one took place immediately on the return to Galilee, and the other during the second year of the public ministry. In one case our Lord was at Cana, in the other at Capernaum. One is expressly noted to have been the first miracle wrought after the return to Galilee; the other is preceded by six miracles distinctly specified, and a multitude of others, which are twice affirmed, in more comprehensive terms, to have been wrought previously in Galilee. In one case the applicant is a Jew, and is blamed, in common with his other countrymen, for the weakness of his faith, and his craving for signs and wonders; in the other, it is a Gentile, who is commended for the strength of his faith, unequalled among the people of Israel. In one case, the nobleman returns from Cana to Capernaum, and meets his servants on the way, who had set out to inform him of the sudden recovery. In the other, the messengers themselves meet our Lord at a short distance from Capernaum, and only learn the cure, when they themselves have entered the house of the centurion. In one case the messengers are servants of the nobleman; in the other, elders of the Jews, whom the centurion employs, as more

honourable than himself, to be his advocates with the great prophet of Galilee. To confound two events, so thoroughly contrasted in place, in time, in every moral and circumstantial feature, in order thereby to obtain a proof that the Evangelists contradict each other, is the extreme of critical folly.

Again, it is urged against the account in the fourth gospel, that there is a solicitous accuracy in the statement of the hour, which bespeaks the anxiety of the narrator to establish the miracle, rather than to shew the real course of the events,—a remark, which itself bespeaks the wish to invent a cavil, rather than to listen to the plainest lessons of common sense. For since the event is recorded by the Evangelist, for the express reason that it was the earliest miracle wrought after the return to Galilee, to relate the facts in such a way as to bring to light their miraculous nature was essential to the very purpose of the narrative. To require, as a test of the reality of miracles, that the narrator should record them with a seeming indifference to their miraculous character, and without any care to bring to light that circumstance which chiefly makes them worthy of record, is an absurdity which, one would suppose, could never have entered the mind of any reasonable man. The whole account in the fourth gospel is a pattern of clearness, conciseness, and simplicity, and well worthy of that beloved disciple, who had leaned at the last supper on the bosom of his Lord.

§ 13. THE PARABLES OF OUR LORD.

Under this head various remarks have been advanced, of which the main purpose is to shew that the Evangelists have misplaced the greater portion of our Lord's parables, and hence that their narratives have only a very imperfect claim to authenticity. The conclusion drawn from this pretended analysis is said, with much truth, to be pregnant with results, affecting the authority of the whole evangelical tradition. But a further inquiry will prove

the rashness of this adverse criticism, and vindicate the claim of the gospels to full and perfect truth.

First, the passage, Matt. xiii. is said to betray its artificial nature, by a double evidence. The consecutive delivery of so many parables is inconsistent with the nature of that mode of instruction, which requires a pause, if the object is not to bewilder, but to enlighten; while the explanation could not have been given, as St. Matthew represents, in the presence of the multitude. Several of the parables, also, in this sevenfold series, are referred by St. Luke to a much later period.

The first objection is at once removed by the express declaration, in all the three gospels, that immediate instruction of the multitude was not our Lord's object in choosing this mode of discourse. Its purpose was judicial, as well as didactic, to discriminate between the crowd of careless hearers, and the little flock of sincere disciples, or humble inquirers. If the pause between each parable were sufficient to leave each of them impressed on the memory, our Lord's purpose was fulfilled; and the full exposition was reserved, either for private converse, or a later season of thoughtful meditation.

The other difficulty is not harder to remove. St. Matthew records the exposition of the first parable, immediately after its delivery, but this is no proof that it did not occur somewhat later, as St. Mark more clearly affirms. The Evangelist might safely leave this circumstance to be supplied by the common sense of unprejudiced readers. We need only to suppose that the question was asked at the first convenient opportunity, when the discourse was suspended, perhaps on the way to the house, and the request for a further exposition of the second parable followed soon after, when they were in the house with Jesus. That three further parables should be added is equally natural, whether they were given, as seems more probable, to the disciples in private, or whether they were spoken after the multitudes were gathered once more, either around the house, or by the seashore. There is no cause whatever, because of one slight

anticipation, for the sake of greater unity in the narrative, to question the general exactness of the whole.

Some of these parables, as those of the leaven and the mustard-seed, are given by St. Luke at a later period of the history. But there is no reason to conclude that they are misplaced in either gospel, since parables of this kind would be sure to be repeated, perhaps several times, in the course of our Lord's journeyings through all the towns and villages of Galilee. Any objection, based on an opposite assumption, is evidently unreasonable and groundless. The place of these parables, in St. Luke, is not less determinate than in St. Matthew, since the very next verse informs us, that Jesus was on his way through the villages, teaching, and journeying towards Jerusalem. They are thus referred to his last journey, not long before his crucifixion ; while the next verses repeat another warning, already given in the Sermon on the Mount, two years before.

A further objection is brought against Matt. xx. 16. The saying of our Lord, that "the last shall be first, and the first last," is asserted to have no connexion with the parable, and Neander extends the same remark to the whole verse. But this charge against the Evangelist's accuracy, like so many others, is without any real foundation. It is true that, in the parable, the first in their hours of service, receive a penny as well as the last ; but it is clear that they depart with the rebuke and displeasure of the householder. So that, when the emblem is transferred to its true objects, the first are justly said to be last, and the last first, in entire harmony with the moral scope of the whole description.

The same remark will vindicate the propriety of the other clause. For in the antitype, the great blessing to which the maxim of electing grace applies, is not the outward reward so much as the favour and approval of the great householder ; and that favour the parties, described under the emblem of the labourers first hired, were about to forfeit by their envy and self-righteousness. Hence no observation could form a more

suitable close to the whole parable, of which it unfolds the deepest meaning.

The next charge is brought against St. Luke, in his parable of the unjust steward. The moral is said to be, that the man, who is an unjust steward of the gifts committed to him by God, may best atone for this pervading unfaithfulness by lenity and beneficence towards his fellow-men. Hence there is affirmed to be a perplexing contrast with the statements which follow, that he who is faithful in the least is faithful also in the greatest, and that no man can serve two masters. The word Mammon, occurring alike in the parable and the isolated maxims, is said to have betrayed the writer into a totally false association.

Now here the difficulty, and the alleged inconsistency, are due merely to a superficial view of the passage, in which the real connexion is very close, and the harmony complete. Our Lord, after vindicating his own care for publicans and sinners, in contrast to the cold self-righteousness of the Pharisees, commends to his disciples the grace of bounty and beneficence, in contrast to their habitual covetousness. First, he urges the duty by a parable, where beneficence is commended as the true wisdom, from the human sympathy which it secures; and he then enforces it by the higher motive, of faithfulness to God. If, in the estimation of worldly men, there may be wisdom in acts of kindness, from the affection they secure, even when joined with a breach of trust, how much higher must be the wisdom of Christian beneficence, when those who are succoured are the heirs of glory, and when, instead of involving unfaithfulness to man, it is the direct fulfilment of a sacred stewardship, received from God. Hence the maxim, which follows, adds greatly to the force of the parable; while the whole passage, by a kind of moral climax, asserts the prudence, the obligation, and the moral necessity, of a bountiful spirit, in every true servant of God. Thus the sequence, when rightly explained, instead of refuting, confirms the accuracy of the Evangelist, who represents the whole to have been spoken in immediate succession. The charge that

he has missed the real meaning of the parable, and grouped the passages merely because they have one word in common, proves the ignorance and presumption of these modern objectors themselves, who stumble at these Divine messages, because of their deep wisdom and hidden beauty.

It is objected, next, to the parable of Dives and Lazarus, that it enforces the Ebionite doctrine; namely, that riches lead to future misery, and voluntary poverty to future bliss, without any regard to moral character. This charge is disproved at once by reading the parable with care. It clearly implies, in verse 30, that the rich man's misery was caused by impenitence, and a total neglect of God's revealed commands. The Ebionite notion is excluded by the simple fact, that Abraham is the other party in the dialogue, who refers the rich man to Moses and the prophets, and that, according to those very books of Moses, the patriarch himself was rich in cattle and silver and gold.

The parable of the nobleman in St. Luke, and of the talents in St. Matthew, are further asserted to be the same, and that St. Luke has mixed up with it another parable, distinct and incongruous in its original character, of rebellious citizens. Else the complex form would come earlier than the other, against all analogy. On the other hand, St. Matthew is said to have added to the parable of the Marriage Feast, where the ill treatment and murder of the messengers is a departure from the original design.

The sole reason for these changes is an assumption, that two similar parables could not have been delivered within so short a time, although it was in a different connexion, with a distinct purpose, and mainly to different auditors. Such an objection can have no force whatever, when opposed to the many clear proofs that the two parables were distinct and successive. The argument from analogy, that the simpler would have come first, and be subsequently expanded, is a specimen of those follies which sometimes assume the mask of learned criticism. We have no right whatever to lay down such a test of historical

reality ; and even if it were applicable, it is satisfied by the simple observation, that St. Luke's parable stands alone, while that of St. Matthew forms one in a Divine trilogy, where three connected parables appear in succession.

Each parable, indeed, is beautifully appropriate in its own place, and for its own auditors. In St. Luke, where the unbelieving multitudes are present, as well as the disciples, two classes are introduced, the servants and the citizens. But in the later parable, addressed in private to the disciples, we find mention of the servants only ; while the kingly aspect of our Lord's character is separately developed in a more didactic and solemn manner, by the description of the final judgment, which immediately follows.

The other two parables, Matt. xxii. 1—14, Luke xiv. 15—24, are not less plainly distinct, although one or two features may be common to both of them. The time, in one case, was during the journey to Jerusalem, while crowds were travelling with our Lord ; the other was delivered in the city, after the public ministry was nearly brought to an end. Not only the mention of the armies, and the burning of the murderers' city, are peculiar to St. Matthew, but also the allusion to the wedding garment. The kingly character of the host is equally confined to this gospel ; while the distinct repetition of the message, first to the streets and lanes of the city, then to the highways and hedges, is equally peculiar to St. Luke. There is an evident progress in the warning, as the rejection of our Lord became more complete. The earlier parable announces simply the exclusion of the unbelieving Jews from the benefits of the gospel ; but in the later one, they are warned that they would persecute the messengers of Christ, and that, in punishment of their guilt, their city itself would be destroyed by hostile enemies. It may be added that the parable in St. Luke bears a distinct pledge of its own genuineness, since it is founded on the facts of that age, when Jewish tetrarchs repeatedly journeyed to Rome, to obtain the kingly title, and return with a higher authority ; while the other

parable is a distinct and clear prophecy, fulfilled to the letter in the fall of Jerusalem.

The conjecture, in the *Leben Jesu*, that the parable in St. Matthew is an imperfect union of three, which were really distinct, one of the feast itself, another of rebellious husbandmen, and an unknown parable of the wedding garment, may be left to sink with its own folly. Such a pretended analysis, instead of giving insight into the looseness of the gospel narratives, is pregnant with results of a different kind, and will reveal to any thoughtful mind the incredible presumption of modern philosophical unbelief.

§ 14. THE DISCOURSES IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

The authenticity of St. John's gospel has been admitted by many critics, who have indulged freely in a sceptical license of doubt with regard to the authorship of the three others. Indeed the interval is so short, from its historically attested date, to the time when it was widely current in the church under the name of St. John, as greatly to embarrass the most determined assailants of the sacred history. Hence it was doubly needful for the mythical interpreters to bend their efforts to its disparagement, that internal objections might outweigh, if possible, the direct testimony in its favour. Besides, therefore, a charge of partiality to St. John, which, if true, would be fatal either to its authenticity, or to the moral purity of the beloved Apostle, a separate attack has been made on the discourses of Jesus in the fourth gospel.

It is objected, then, first of all, that this gospel every where gives John the precedence of Peter; or, in the flippant style of the accuser, that it converts the triumvirate of the three other gospels into a monarchy, where James is wholly cast out, and Peter is deposed, and left in the second place. James is never named, and only in the appendix is there even a mention of 'the

sons of Zebedee.' No James appears in the vocation of the Apostles, nor any speech of his in the whole narrative. Again, Peter is degraded to a lower place. He only comes to Christ by means of his brother; and his speeches and actions at the last supper, and in the garden, are so many mistakes. It is through John that he gains admission to the palace, where he denies his master, and John is described as the only disciple, who ventures near to the cross, and receives a special relation to Mary, of which no trace is found elsewhere. The vision at the sea of Galilee illustrates John's superior discernment, and he gains the higher distinction of tarrying till his Lord shall come. At the sepulchre, John is the first to believe in the resurrection, and thus figuratively, as well as literally, he outruns Peter throughout the whole gospel. Hence it would follow, either that the gospel is not written by St. John, or that he has perverted facts, to exalt himself above Peter, a view still more fatal to its inspired authority as the word of God.

This whole charge, however, is a gross perversion of the sacred history. And first, in the call of the Apostles, that of James is certainly implied. For if Andrew was the first of the two disciples, to find his own brother, and bring him to Jesus, it follows that the other did the same; and hence either James was the second disciple, mentioned along with Andrew; or if it were John, as appears more probable, it is implied equally that James was brought to Jesus by his own brother, as Simon had been just before. Since no speech of James, apart from his brother, is found in the three first gospels, a similar silence in the fourth is no just ground for suspicion against it.

Again, the charge of depressing Peter, to exalt St. John, is disproved by a simple induction of the successive allusions made to either of them. In the first scene, St. John continues nameless and obscure, while Simon receives, when he first comes to Jesus, a distinct prediction of his eminent honour in the Church of Christ. The next mention of either disciple, separately, is vi. 4, where Andrew is identified by the title, 'Simon Peter's brother.'

At the close of the chapter, Peter alone appears, as foremost among the apostles in confessing Jesus. "Simon Peter answered him—Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." This is clearly not a new version of the account in Matt. xvi. 16, as the objector asserts, but an additional testimony, most honourable to Peter's faith, and recorded in this gospel alone; so far is it from seeking to degrade him below his due level. Besides this, we have mention of Philip, of Nathanael, of Andrew, of Philip a second time, of Thomas, and a third time of Andrew and Philip, before any mention at all, either by name or description, of St. John himself. In the account of the last supper, Peter retains his precedence. When our Lord washes the feet of the disciples, he begins with this Apostle. In the question about the traitor, it is still Peter who ventures on the inquiry, and the beloved disciple is named for the first time, because his place, nearest to Jesus, rendered his help needful to obtain a private answer. So far is St. John from turning aside to raise himself above his brother apostle, that Peter has been honourably mentioned by him three times, before he introduces himself at all, and then only because the incident plainly required it, and could not otherwise be intelligible. The next mention of St. John is at the trial of our Lord; and certainly to be known to the Jewish high-priest, from the New Testament point of view, is no real superiority, and could not be mentioned with any purpose of self-exaltation. The denial of Peter is given, exactly as in the other gospels, and without any further aggravation of his guilt. In the closing narrative, though John has the honour of a more speedy discernment of Christ's presence, the most prominent feature is the zeal of Peter, his full restoration to favour, and the thrice repeated commission he receives. And hence the only mark of superiority, given to St. John in the gospel, is one which is fully confirmed by the writings he has left; while the greater eminence of Simon Peter in outward activity and visible honour, as the leader and mouth of the apostles, is just as plain in this gospel as in all the others. This correspondence, indeed,

between the relative place of these two apostles in the narrative, and their later history, is one powerful evidence of the veracity of the New Testament.

That St. James receives no special notice in this gospel may be very simply explained. The Evangelist does not introduce himself until the last Supper. Now we are told by St. Luke, that Peter and John had been sent together by Jesus, to make ready the Passover. A peculiar intimacy between them would naturally follow, or else existed before, such as will quite explain their joint visit, first to the palace, and then to the sepulchre, with an implied absence of Andrew and James, their two brothers.

The objections brought against the discourse with Nicodemus, are these;—that he is mentioned in this gospel alone, and does not appear in the general tradition; that the purpose of introducing him was to roll away the reproach, that our Lord had only illiterate disciples; that his name renders him a fit representative of the dominant class; that a Rabbi could not have been so ignorant of the sense of a well-known Jewish metaphor, as the discourse pretends; that his continued perplexity is still more unnatural; and that the whole passage, verses 16—21, though ascribed by the writer to Jesus, is evidently the result of his own ideas, and marked by his own style, so that he has departed altogether from the province of a faithful historian, and put his own words into the mouth of Jesus.

The main reason for charging the writer with so gross a forgery is amply refuted by the tone of the whole work, and even by the date of its publication. No where is the truth more prominent, that the faith of Christ brings honour to those who receive it; but that sinners, whatever their rank or learning, can bring no honour to the truth of God, which rescues them from ruin. We might as well fling up dirt to pollute the sunbeams of heaven, as cast so foul a reproach on this sublime narrative, that it was garbled with a view to gain credit to the gospel, from the rank and station of its first disciples. The objection drawn

from the name is equally frivolous. It is well known that Greek names were then common in Palestine ; and Nicolaus, akin to Nicodemus both in form and meaning, occurs in the book of Acts, in the list of the seven deacons, and is the name, in Josephus, of Herod's counsellor and friend. The name, therefore, in this instance, can be no presumption against the truth of the narrative.

The other objection is more formidable, chiefly, however, from the admissions of modern critics, and not from its own strength. The reasons for denying the words to be those of our Lord himself, are the following. First, that there is no special reference to Nicodemus, but only a general discourse on the destination of the Son of God ;—as if these truths were not important for Nicodemus himself, and such knowledge especially required in a teacher of Israel. Next, John iii. 19, resembles i. 5, 9 ; which will merely prove that the Evangelist remembered these sayings of Christ, even when he began to write the gospel. And what view must we have of his wisdom, if he deferred the blessed task of reviving these sacred recollections, until the writing was actually begun ? Again, John iii. 16 resembles 1 John iv. 9 ; which is very natural, if the Epistle were written (the most probable view) soon after the gospel. Next, that the phrase, “only begotten Son,” which is here repeated, is a favourite with St. John (i. 14—13 ; 1 John iv. 9) and occurs only in his writings. But this is merely the same objection, rendered more specific, and has been already answered, for the term occurs only in the preface to the Gospel, and once in the first Epistle. Next, that many things are spoken of as past, which were then future. This is inconsistent with the main charge, since, if true, it would shew that the Evangelist did not intend these words to be ascribed to Jesus. But it is really untrue. The love of darkness, rather than light, had already been displayed during that very visit to Jerusalem, in which the conversation occurred. He, of whom we are told just before, that ‘he knew what was in man,’ did not need the hatred of the Jewish rulers to be more fully

developed, before pronouncing over them this true and solemn judgment ; while it was a reasonable caution to Nicodemus, surrounded as he was by the enemies of Jesus, and in danger, like other timorous disciples, of loving the praise of men more than that of God. Next, it is said to be far too objective to come from the lips of Jesus. But on the contrary, this is rather a sign that it did proceed from him, since our Lord constantly speaks of himself in the third person, even in familiar discourse with the twelve Apostles.

Is it then incredible, on comparison with the whole context, and the rest of the gospel history, that our Lord should have made this full statement to Nicodemus, so early in his ministry ? The very reverse may be shewn by various reasons. According to the testimony of the same Evangelist, the Baptist had proclaimed Jesus under this very title, the Son of God, and all the four sacred writers agree that he was addressed under that name, at his baptism, by a voice from heaven. In his last visit, St. Matthew records a parable which he spake to the Pharisees, where he applies to himself the very same title—" Having one only son, his well-beloved, he sent him last unto them." At every visit to Jerusalem, if we credit this gospel, this title was repeatedly adopted, even in public assemblies of hostile Jews. The same honour is indirectly claimed in the Sermon on the Mount, the most public, and one of the earliest, of our Lord's discourses in Galilee. There is also a plain reason, which might induce our Lord to speak more openly to Nicodemus, than was his usual custom ; because that disciple's opportunities of hearing Jesus, from his position, and the rooted hostility of the other rulers, would probably be few. The seed of the word was therefore sown more abundantly, that it might spring up during years of separation, and at length yield the full harvest of faith, when the Crucifixion, by fulfilling the prophecy, verse 15, had put a seal on the claims of this great prophet of Galilee, and proved him to be indeed the Messiah of God.

Objections of a similar kind have been brought against the

discourse in chapter v., at the next visit of our Lord to Jerusalem. First, the defence he offers for the cure on the Sabbath is said to be drawn from a metaphysical proposition, the uninterrupted activity of God, and one not likely to be familiar to Jesus. A truly monstrous idea, that our blessed Lord should not be familiar with a truth, which beams out in every page of the Old Testament, and is habitually in the thoughts of every devout Christian! Next, in the other gospels, such miracles are followed by instruction on the nature and design of the Sabbath; but here, by a digression on the person of Christ, and his relation to the Father. This objection would be of some force, if our Lord were likely to assign always the same reasons, and not at liberty to vary his discourse with varying circumstances. But, in reality, there is a close resemblance in the reasons assigned in this gospel, and in the three others. For these also represent him as appealing to the dignity of his person, in defence of his conduct. "In this place is one greater than the temple. The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath-day." Exactly parallel is the reply in St. John. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I also work." But the same gospel also presents a parallel to the reasons drawn from the actual conduct of the Jews, from the priests who profane the Sabbath in the temple, and the loosing of the ox or ass for the watering, in another and later passage—"Moses gave you circumcision, and ye on the Sabbath circumcise a man. If a man on the Sabbath receive circumcision, that the law of Moses be not broken, are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath-day?" Instead of a contrast, there is thus a close and striking resemblance, between the reasons advanced by our Lord in the fourth, and in the three other gospels.

Again, the discourse is said to be full of analogies with St. John's first Epistle, and with passages in the Gospel, where the Baptist speaks, or the writer in his own person. The objection, as regards the Epistle, is merely a sign that St. John wrote it under the full impression of the discourses he had recorded just

before in the gospel. The other passages referred to are John i. 18; iii. 35; xi. 43; xix. 35. The first of these is exactly such a reference to our Lord's discourse, as we should expect to find, when the main object of the writer was to rescue from oblivion precious sayings, which had not been noted by the earlier Evangelists. The third passage, again, is a direct and plain reference to this very discourse, which only confirms its genuineness. Having recorded our Saviour's description of the great hindrance which kept back the Jews from the faith—"How can ye believe, which receive praise one of another, and seek not the praise which cometh from God only?"—the apostle, when the history leads him to mention certain half-disciples, who did not confess Christ through worldly fear, refers back to these words of Jesus, as the key to explain their conduct. "For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." He thus intimates that they proved the truth of the warning, which the Lord, the Searcher of hearts, had so pointedly given them in this discourse, two years before. The resemblance between John v. 32, and John xix. 35; xxi. 24, may be naturally explained in the same manner. The Apostle might easily adopt, on two occasions, a form of deliberate affirmation, which he had recorded, just before, in the conversation of his Lord. To suppose that he ascribes the words to Jesus, without any historical ground, is to charge him with the most aggravated falsehood—a falsehood uttered at the very moment when he is setting before his readers, in the person of Jesus, the high standard of a spotless veracity, which disdains the very touch of suspicious and doubtful evidence. Hence the whole argument reduces itself to one single passage, spoken by the Baptist, and which has been already vindicated from its own context.

It is urged, again, that since the style of the Baptist, of Jesus, and of the Evangelist, is the same in this gospel, either the Baptist determined the style of our Lord and his Apostle, which is clearly unreasonable, or the Evangelist determined the style, both of Jesus and the Baptist, which implies a constant

departure from historical truth. The whole of this argument rests on two short passages, i. 29, 36 ; iii. 27—36, in which the words ascribed to the Baptist are said to have a marked resemblance to the peculiar style of St. John. A narrow foundation indeed, on which to rest a universal charge of historical falsehood. It is plain, on the other hand, that the Baptist and our Lord himself must have uttered many sayings, which are not put on record ; that the selections of this gospel obey a double law, being designed to bear witness to the true glory of Jesus, and to be a supplement to the former gospels ; that the occurrence of one or two, or of a dozen such testimonies, on the part of the Baptist, is quite natural and probable, before the close of his ministry ; and that the disciple, who leaned on the bosom of Jesus, would have his own trains of thought, and even his modes of expression, moulded repeatedly by those discourses, which it was his peculiar privilege to rescue from oblivion, and to record for the lasting instruction of the whole Church of Christ.

In chapter vi. it is affirmed that the writer knew nothing of the historical institution of the Supper, and therefore seized the opportunity for a kind of proleptic institution. It is hard to speak with gravity of such conjectures, where one absurdity of scepticism is piled upon another. How could the writer be ignorant of a circumstance, the most public and notorious of all in the sacred history, next to the Crucifixion itself, and of which every Christian was practically and publicly reminded every Lord's day, one of those facts which St. Paul delivered earliest to his Corinthian converts, and doubtless to every other church where he laboured ? It is untrue that the writer gives no trace of his knowledge, since he refers to the fact, as already well known, in the elliptical phrase, "supper being come," with a plain allusion to the words in the three earlier gospels. Finally, there is here no proleptic institution, but a vivid metaphor, to describe the blessed and saving influence of our Lord's atoning sacrifice. "The bread which I give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

Another charge is revived, from the Wolfenbittel Fragments, that Jesus "would appear to have studied to trifle with the Jews in his words, that he might not be understood by them, but rejected. Now he did not really so act, nor could have done, nor, if he had taught in this way, could he have produced the effects which history proves." But this objection is only an evidence for the truth of the statements in this gospel. For we learn from the others, that when the second year was far advanced, our Lord had recourse to parables, expressly because of the popular unbelief, to veil his words from profane and careless hearers, while he stimulated the inquiries of sincere disciples. Now the discourse at Capernaum was still later, at the very close of the second year, and near to the Third Passover. Hence that the same style of teaching should be continued, and carried still further, in the most guilty town of Galilee, where he had laboured the most, is a clear sign of internal consistency and truth. On the other hand, the union of wonderful works, notorious and incontrovertible, like the miracle of the loaves just before, with a doctrine mysterious as well as holy, that excited and almost baffled curiosity, is the combination suited, beyond all others, to produce a deep and lasting impression, and thus to promote the spread of the gospel in later years.

Another ground of suspicion is drawn from John x. 22—28. Three months had passed since the allegory of the Good Shepherd, and since much would have been done and spoken by our Lord in the interval, that would thrust this discourse into the background, it is thought very unlikely that he should recur to it, and even affirmed that he would be unable to repeat it word for word! It is the Evangelist, who has just quoted the allegory, with whom alone it is likely that it would remain fresh on the memory.

Such cavils might amuse by their extreme puerility, if they did not rather awaken disgust by their profaneness. If the account were a mere invention, whence comes the statement, on which alone the objection is founded.—"It was at Jerusalem

the feast of the dedication, and winter, and Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon's porch?" It was quite easy for the weaver of a legend to append the conversation at once to the allegory. The verse, on which the charge is made to rest, is a clear proof of his regard for historical accuracy. To say that Jesus must have forgotten his own words, after three months, is as ridiculous as profane; and doubly so here, since not one clause is actually repeated. The Jews are only reminded of the parable, and a new application of it is made to their present unbelief. And since it was almost the last of his previous addresses at Jerusalem, and he had plainly been absent from the city ever since; the allusion here is so natural and consistent, that it may almost rank among the undesigned coincidences of the gospel.

Next, it is urged that John xii. 44—50, being a mere echo of previous sayings, cannot have formed a real close to the ministry of Jesus; while the hypothesis of others, that it is designed to be a mere epitome of his teaching, is disproved, it is justly said, by the opening words.

Now the Evangelist neither affirms nor implies that these words were the latest in our Lord's public ministry. It is true, they are placed after the retirement, v. 36; but this was only a seclusion for the day, and apparently took place on the very evening of the public entry into Jerusalem. Since our Lord then proposed himself openly to the Jews as their true king, the reflections that follow, if this be the date, have a special propriety. There would thus be two later days of teaching, in one of which the words, xii. 44—50, were uttered. Any objection, either from the partial repetition of former sayings, or from their unsuitableness for the parting address, is therefore worthless. Twenty, or even a hundred similar addresses to the people, so far as the limits of time are concerned, might easily have occurred in those last days of our Lord's ministry. Such cavils are only worthy of notice, so far as they reveal the spirit and critical good sense of the boasted champions of philosophical

unbelief, before whose profound wisdom the star of Bethlehem is to grow pale, and historical Christianity to disappear.

§ 15. ON THE MIRACLES OF THE LOAVES.

Two distinct miracles are recorded by St. Matthew and St. Mark, in which our Lord fed several thousands of men with a few loaves and fishes, on the borders of the sea of Galilee. The resemblance of the two events, and the absence of the second in St. Luke, has emboldened several critics to pronounce that they are only the varied forms of one and the same tradition. This opinion, which even Neander adopts, is seized upon with avidity by the mythical theorists, to discredit both the narratives, and reduce the whole to the level of a mere fable. Yet since the former event is described in each of the four gospels, with the place, the time, and all the attendant circumstances, and with great minuteness of detail, their task is not one of the easiest. Let us examine the objections with care, and they will only confirm the truth of the sacred history.

First, the repetition is said to cause much difficulty. The scene, in both, is near the sea of Galilee; the occasion, a too long delay of the people with Jesus; his wish to feed them is treated by the disciples as impossible; the food consists of a few loaves and fishes; the people are made to sit down, thanks are given, the food is distributed, their wants are fully satisfied, several baskets are filled with the fragments, and Jesus then crosses the sea.

Now we may well ask, which of these features require to be varied the second time, in order to satisfy the new, philosophical tests of credibility? Ought the second miracle, to obtain credit, to have been wrought when the people had just arrived, before they felt any hunger, or their own stores were spent; or should the supply have been wine and venison, instead of loaves and fishes, or the food given without thanksgiving, or the people

kept standing to receive it, or the effect have been to leave them still unsatisfied, or the scene have been chosen in or near some city, where food was quite accessible, or Jesus have remained afterwards in desert places on the east of the lake, and abandoned his public ministry? But if all these suppositions are evidently absurd, what shall we think of an objection to the second miracle, which rests merely on the exhibition of such resemblances as these?

The many difficulties, falsely alleged to exist, resolve themselves into one solitary scruple, how the disciples could have forgotten the first miracle, and express equal surprize and perplexity the second time. Now this is purely a question of mental history, in which the gospels, amidst their Divine simplicity, shew far deeper wisdom than the critics who assail them. And first, the writers are so far from overlooking the circumstance, that they seek to impress the fact upon our notice, and after both the miracles, describe the same perplexity as subsisting still, so that it drew upon the disciples a severe rebuke from our Lord for their want of memory and of faith. The objection is therefore one of presumptuous ignorance alone. Those who pretend that a miracle is incredible, whatever be the outward evidence, think it also incredible that men, who had seen one such miracle, should not anticipate its repetition as a matter of course, when a similar occasion had arisen. What contradiction can be more flagrant? On their own principles, if they themselves had been in the place of the disciples, they ought to have continued, even after a sevenfold repetition, just as incredulous as ever.

In the present instance, many explanations may be offered, and none of them improbable, to account for the renewed perplexity of the Apostles. Amidst the exciting scenes which were constantly before their eyes, and with the experience of days and months, in which our Lord wrought miracles of healing, and yet received support from the alms of the devout women or others, who ministered to him of their substance, this special exercise of power might for the moment be forgotten. Or if remembered,

they might think it unreasonable to look for its repetition. Their weak faith, depending on recent impressions, might have lost the due sense of the power of Jesus. Or lastly, their question may simply have been intended to state their own inability to procure a supply, without excluding some uncertain hope, actually present in their minds, that the miracle of Divine bounty would be repeated once more. The sequel, in Matt. xvi. 7, shews how slowly the fixed habits of thought, derived from the ordinary laws of nature, yield to repeated exhibitions of Divine power, and is justly quoted by Olshausen in that light. The sneering remark of the infidel critic, that it was to the honour of the disciples not to confound the two cases, as the commentator has done, is equally absurd and profane. For not only are the words of our Lord a clear proof, to every Christian, that their conduct, instead of deserving honour, merited rebuke for the blindness of heart it betrayed, but the facts themselves teach the same lesson. The chosen disciples had a stronger ground, than the promiscuous multitude, for depending on their Lord, to keep them from starving in the wilderness; and it was a lighter tax on their faith, to trust that twelve men would be supplied, than many thousands.

One further reason is offered for confounding the two miracles together; that the account of the first, in St. John, agrees with that of the second elsewhere, in two features. The scene opens with the words of Jesus, not of the disciples; and the people come to him on a mountain, not in a desert.

Now it is plain, by comparison, that the alleged agreement is a real contrast. For the first words in St. John are the address to Philip—"Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" But the opening words, in the second miracle, are entirely different—a statement by Jesus of his compassion for the multitude, on account of their fast of three days, and the danger of their fainting with hunger on their return. But though the speech of Philip cannot be identified with the introduction to the second miracle, it has its place fixed, by comparison, in the

account of the first, since it elicits the very answer St. Mark has recorded—"Shall we go and buy two-hundred pennyworth of bread, that every one of them may take a little?" Hence the words in question, like the rest of the passage, distinguish the account in St. John from the second, and identify it with the earlier miracle, in the other gospels. The allusion to the mountain is equally consistent, since it is named in the first miracle no less than in the other. It is also clearly implied, in John vi. 15, that our Lord was not on the mountain at the very time of the miracle, but only before and after its occurrence.

It is further objected to St. John's account, that it makes our Lord propose to work this miracle, when the multitudes first came to him, and before the fit occasion was come. But this too is a garbled statement. We have mention, first of all, in vi. 2, of the multitudes who resorted to Jesus for healing on the further side of the lake, the very circumstance expressed more fully in the other gospels. The retirement, near the close of the day, to the mountain, is a distinct and additional statement. This was the natural signal for the multitudes to disperse, and provide themselves with food in the nearest villages. Instead of this, the multitudes still continue to throng our Lord, and wait at the foot of the hill, or ascend up the sides of it, in expectation of further cures, or fresh instruction. Here, probably, the request of the disciples was made—"Send them away, for the hour is now late." Our Lord then intimated, in general terms, his intention to procure them a supply, but with no hint of a miracle. "They need not depart—give ye them to eat." Upon their perplexity, because they knew they had no such provision, he turns to Philip, who was of Bethsaida, and therefore most likely to know the locality thoroughly, since it was a district of Bethsaida: "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" On his reply, the question is asked, "How many loaves have ye?" and Andrew, after inquiry, gives the answer—"There is a lad here, who has five small loaves and two fishes, but what are they among so many?" Upon this our Lord and the

disciples would descend the hill, and join the multitudes; and when the meal was ended, Jesus bade the disciples embark, and after dismissing the throng, ascended, as St. Matthew and St. John agree to inform us, into the mountain once more. The alleged contrast is therefore a punctual and perfect agreement.

The passage, Matt. xvi. 5—12. Mark viii. 14—21, is another striking proof that the two miracles are alike real, and distinct from each other. The hypocrisy which pretends to acquit the writers of wilful falsehood, while it coolly sets down all the facts of the history as legendary tales, here betrays its own utter folly. Olshausen had justly remarked that, if the two accounts were legendary, it would be natural that the second should embellish and amplify, not contract and diminish, the former miracle. In reply it is said, that the remark betrays ignorance of the true mythical view, since the question is not of an unscrupulous narrator, who would purposely amplify the former history; but it is held that one tradition gave five, and another four thousand, and that the writer copied both with equal honesty. But if these were two isolated and inconsistent traditions of the same real or fancied event, which the writer of the gospel uncritically adopted from distinct sources, and with perfect honesty, how could he append a conversation of Jesus, where a direct appeal is made to both miracles, as two facts, distinct in themselves, and quite notorious. “When I brake the five loaves among the five thousand, how many baskets took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets took ye up? They said, Seven. And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand?” In the presence of such a passage, it is a hopeless attempt to explain away or confound together the two events, and still to admit the perfect honesty of the writer. The statement sweeps away at once the pitiable hypocrisies of sceptical criticism, and compels us to admit the occurrence of the two events, or to own that the two Evangelists are both guilty of a deliberate lie. The

blasphemy is far less dangerous, when it is stripped of its thin disguises, and appears openly in its true form.

But the evidence for the reality of each miracle increases, the more closely we examine the four narratives. In the former, we have every detail that can fix its true place. It occurred soon after the death of the Baptist, when his disciples had brought the tidings of his murder to Jesus, a little before the third passover of his ministry, Matt. xiv. 11—14. Mark vi. 28—34. Luke ix. 9—12. John vi. 4. The Apostles had just returned from their first public mission, Mark vi. 30, 32. Luke ix. 10—12. The place was on the further or eastern side of the lake, in a district belonging to Bethsaida, Matt. xiv. 13. Mark vi. 32. Luke ix. 10. John vi. 1, 2; and Jesus reached it by crossing the sea, John vi. 1. Mark vi. 32. The departure was for the sake of rest, which was hindered by the multitudes that flocked after him for the sake of cure, John vi. 2. Matt. xiv. 13, 14. Mark vi. 33, 34. It took place towards evening, after many cures had been wrought the same day, xiv. 14, 15. Mark vi. 34, and a course of public teaching, Luke ix. 11. Our Lord puts a question to Philip, who was himself of Bethsaida, where a supply could be found, while Andrew reports that a lad is there, who has five loaves and two fishes. Being near the time of the Passover, there was much grass in the place, on which the men sat down by hundreds and fifties, so that the enumeration was simple and easy. At the close, twelve *cophini*, a peculiar kind of basket, were filled with the fragments. The disciples at once embarked, but Jesus stayed to dismiss the people, and then went up once again into the mountain to pray, since retirement had been the original object for which they crossed over. The wind was contrary, and hindered the voyage, which was directed to Capernaum on the west of the lake. The people were preparing to take Jesus by force, and make him king, when he retired from them to the mountain. In the fourth watch, between three and six in the morning, when they had rowed five and twenty or thirty furlongs, Jesus drew near to them, walking on

the sea. They were all terrified, supposing it to be an apparition ; when he said, "It is I, be not afraid." Peter entreated to come to him, but his faith presently failed, and Jesus rescued him from sinking in the waves. They entered the ship, when the wind ceased, and the ship quickly reached the opposite shore ; not, however, at Capernaum, but somewhere not very distant. He was known at once, and multitudes flocked to him again. Meanwhile, the people on the opposite side expected to meet Jesus there in the morning, and were perplexed to find neither him nor the disciples, whom the adverse wind would be likely to have driven back, especially since they embarked without their Lord. Meanwhile, boats had crossed from Tiberias, on the south west of the lake, and had come near to the scene of the miracle. Several of those who had remained embarked in these boats the next day, and came to Capernaum, where they expected to meet with Jesus. When they found him, either on his return the same day to the city, or by their own search in its neighbourhood, their first question shews their surprize and perplexity—"Rabbi, when camest thou hither?" Soon after, our Lord teaches in the synagogue of the town, and, in a long discourse or conversation, alludes throughout to the recent miracle ; teaches that it was meant for a higher purpose than merely to satisfy, for the moment, the bodily hunger ; contrasts the blessings of the gospel, alike with the bread he had just multiplied, and the manna in the wilderness ; and alludes, in a figurative manner, to his own death, and the blessings which would flow from it to the whole world.

The other miracle, though mentioned only in two gospels, has hardly less evident marks of its historical reality. After the former miracle, a Passover soon followed, which Jesus did not attend ; and the next event noticed is the presence of Scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem, who came down to watch the proceedings of this Galilean Reformer, since he had not ventured to be present at the feast. Their censure leads to a severe reproof from our Lord, which alarms his disciples ; and the

opposition is so dangerous, that Jesus retires to the district of Tyre and Sidon, at the farthest limit of Palestine. There he studies privacy, Mark vii. 24, but his works of mercy reveal him, and he cannot be hid. After one remarkable cure, and possibly several others, he therefore returns to the more retired or eastern side of the lake, not, however, by way of Capernaum, which he now avoided, but through the eastern district of Decapolis. Multitudes flock to hear him, and be healed by him, as before; when, after three days' delay, the second miracle of feeding occurs, but the number is not equally great, being about four thousand. The arrangement by fifties and hundreds would make the enumeration almost a matter of course in each miracle. At the close, instead of dismissing the disciples as before, Jesus enters the ship with them, and crosses the lake, but still avoids Capernaum, and lands at Magdala or Dalmanutha, on the south western shore. Here, however, his persevering enemies quickly find him, and again manifest their bitter opposition. He therefore leaves the place, and returns once more to the eastern side; and then retires beyond the present reach of their malice, in a private manner, to the tetrarchy of Philip, and the neighbourhood of Cæsarea Philippi; where the conversation follows, recorded by all the three Evangelists, in which our Lord announces his rejection, sufferings, and death. When we add to all these historical features the minute distinction, constantly observed, between the kind of basket used the first and the second time, in gathering the fragments, and the reproof that soon followed the second miracle; we have proofs of historical reality which could hardly be exceeded in so brief a narrative, and which defy all the assaults of ancient or modern infidelity.

§ 17. ON THE RAISING OF THE DEAD.

Three miracles of this highest kind are recorded in the course of the gospel history. Each of them separately, and all com-

bined, have been assailed with adverse criticisms, a review of which may close this protracted inquiry.

It is needless to waste any time on the so-called natural interpretations, over which the mythical interpreters claim an easy and inglorious victory. We have as little to do with abstract objections, from the difficulty of understanding how the dead are raised, of which St. Paul has marked, by anticipation, the utter folly. These form a main part of the infidel argument, in its recent form, but wherever there is the least faith in a true and living God, their futility must be self-evident. We have only to consider the specific reasons, drawn from the contents of each narrative, and the statements or omissions of the Evangelists, for impugning the reality of these miracles of our Lord.

And first, it is urged that the climax is very suspicious. The daughter of Jairus is raised to life from her death-bed, the widow's son, on the way to his interment, and Lazarus, after four days in the tomb. If the death could be doubted in the first instance, it would be more difficult in the second, and impossible in the third. Thus it seems to be inferred by the objector, that each later miracle was invented, to supply a deficiency in the previous instance of resurrection.

Now if the three events were all recorded in the same history, and in the above order, there would be a seeming force in this argument, and the suspicion, however groundless, would not be quite unnatural. But the case is very different; and the objection is based on assumptions, which the objector discards as untrue in the whole course of his reasoning. If the second gospel was compiled from the first and third, how comes St. Mark to omit the more conspicuous miracle at Nain, which was designed, by the hypothesis, to remedy the defects of the first. Or again, if a climax were the object, how comes the second gospel to destroy it, in the moment of its fancied creation, by making the recovery at Nain to precede the raising of the ruler's daughter? Or finally, if the fourth gospel, as so often maintained in the same argument, is complete in itself, and not a

supplement to the others, how can the solitary resurrection of Lazarus be any proof that a climax of such miracles was at all in view? Taken on its own premises, the charge is made up of gross and palpable contradictions. The climax is not to be found in any one gospel; in the third there is even a partial anticlimax. So far as it exists, it is found only in the events themselves, deduced from a comparison of the four writers. We must therefore either admit that the gospels were written in their actual order, and that each writer knew the work of his predecessors, (an admission fatal to all the countless cavils that depend on their assumed fragmentary nature) or else allow that the climax, being found only on the events apart from the historians, is an evidence that the miracles were actual occurrences in the history of Jesus; so that a wise progression took place in these works of Divine power, which the writers have not themselves noticed, and which only comes to light on a careful collation of their separate statements.

The raising of the ruler's daughter is mentioned in three gospels, and hence claims the first notice. The view, which even Olshausen has strangely adopted, that the text describes merely the recovery from a swoon, and not an actual resurrection from death, has been well exposed by the mythical interpreter, who does good service to truth, in brushing away all the remaining rationalism, which clings even to the orthodox Divines of his own country. It is perfectly clear, to any simple reader, that each Evangelist relates the event as a true resurrection; and the paraphrase of Fritsche is quite correct—"Count not the maid to be dead, but only asleep, since she shall be quickly restored to life again." But the account of the first gospel, compared with the others, has a serious difficulty. For here the ruler says at once to Jesus—"My daughter is now dead; but come, lay thine hand upon her, and she shall live." On the other hand, the other gospels make him say merely that she was in extreme danger, and then apply for a cure. During the delay that follows, a message comes, announcing her death, and Jesus seems to antici-

pate the father's despair of relief by the soothing words, "Fear not, only believe." The presence of three disciples only, which is mentioned by St. Mark and St. Luke, is a fresh detail, wanting in St. Matthew, but implies no contradiction, either real or apparent; while the cure of the woman who had the issue, on the way to the house, proves clearly that the same event is described in all three gospels.

This difference, however, in St. Matthew's account, is a natural consequence of his studied brevity. The ruler applied for his daughter's cure, in words, as one at the point of death, but in reality, when her death had just occurred. The later discovery of the fact on the way to the house, and the encouragement then given to the desponding parent, were not essential to the main object; and no writer, in relating a speech, is bound to verbal exactness, but only to such a degree of accuracy as agrees with the more diffuse or briefer style of his narrative. The ruler entreated for the cure of his daughter; and she really had died just before, though he only knew her to be in extreme danger, or at the point of death. To substitute the virtual for the verbal request was the only way of retaining substantial truth in so condensed a statement; while the two later gospels supply the means of correcting the unimportant misconception, as to the details of the event, which the briefer account of St. Matthew might occasion in the mind of his readers. There is nothing here, inconsistent even with the full idea of verbal inspiration. For this only implies that every word is Divinely adapted for the purpose of the revelation; and cannot signify that every saying, recorded in Scripture, is a verbatim transcript from the mouth of the speaker; but only that it is a faithful exhibition of the scope and substance of his words, with reference to that object for which alone they are put on record.

It is urged, again, that the fresh details in St. Mark and St. Luke betray a design of embellishment; and St. Mark is charged with retranslating the Greek of St. Luke into Syriac, with the same dishonest purpose. This last charge is refuted by all the

proofs, given before, that his gospel was prior to St. Luke's, and known to that Evangelist, and by every other minute indication of the writer's intimate knowledge of Palestine, its language, customs and localities. It only serves, then, to illustrate the profaneness of the mythical theorist, to whom every hypothesis that degrades the sacred writers, is acceptable for that reason alone. The more general charge is equally devoid of the least shadow of evidence. In fact, the double miracle appears with most vividness, and in bolder relief, in the condensed account of St. Matthew. The effect of the fresh details is chiefly to temper its supernatural character, by circumstances, which add nothing to its greatness, but only confirm its historical reality, explain more clearly the exact order of the events, and illustrate the feelings of the parent and bystanders, and the compassion of the Lord Jesus. Indeed it is difficult to conceive any narrative, equally brief, which bids such entire defiance to every attempt to uproot it from the field of positive history, and transport it into the fairy regions of mythical legend. We have the place, near the sea of Galilee on the western side, when Jesus had just returned from crossing the lake. We have the company, for much people were gathered together; and from the first gospel it seems that Jesus was in the house of Matthew. We have the name and office of the applicant;—"Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue of Capernaum;" his posture and entreaties; the language he employs; the age of his daughter, for whose cure he applies; the circumstance that she was an only child; the thronging of the crowds on the way; the cure of the woman with the issue; her discovery and confession; the message that followed from the ruler's house; the promise of Jesus to the father; the entrance of Jesus, with Peter, James, and John only, into the house; the presence and conduct of the mourners; their expulsion from the house, where their services were to be needless; the presence of both parents and the three disciples, in the chamber where the cure was wrought; the gesture of Jesus, the very words in Syriac, which he used, and the double

charge, to tell no man, and to give food to the damsel on her restoration. Nothing can be more simple, natural, and consistent, than the whole of this beautiful and Divine narrative.

But here another objection is raised, that the charge to the spectators of the cure is opposed to the account in St. Matthew, who says that the fame of it went abroad in the whole land. It is answered, however, at once by the case of the leper, the blind man, and others, where a similar charge was given, but soon transgressed by the parties themselves. Such facts, from their very nature, must have become public. The mourners, who had been expelled from the house, and who knew that the maid was dead, would afterwards see her alive ; and the parents themselves would not interpret strictly so strange a command. Hence its real effect, and that which our Lord doubtless had in view, was to prevent a factitious publicity, the fruit of parental fondness and loquacity on the one side, and of vulgar curiosity on the other ; which would serve only to destroy the moral impression of the miracle, and perhaps to bring it into discredit afterwards with thoughtful and serious minds.

Let us now proceed to the second of these miracles, the raising of the widow's son at Nain. The first objection to its truth is drawn from the silence of the two other gospels. If, however, the second gospel was compiled, as the objector fancies, from the first and third, the omission in St. Mark is no presumption against St. Luke's testimony, but only a disproof of the objector's own theory. To say that the writer, at iii. 20, leapt from the third to the first gospel, and returned only at iv. 35, or iv. 21, is an explanation purely ridiculous, since the question, on this view of the gospel, must be, why such a leap should be made. But the omission of the miracle at Nain, in St. Matthew, may still be urged as a difficulty. According to St. Luke, many disciples were present, and the fame of the event spread widely through the province. It may be replied, first, that the first gospel clearly implies the occurrence of many miracles, which are not expressly detailed, as we may infer from Matt. iv. 23, 24 ; ix. 35 ; xi. 4, 5 ;

xii. 15 ; xiv. 14, and other places. The writer, then, must have made a selection, and thus have omitted many, which in themselves were striking, and worthy of record. Next, there is no reason why he should multiply the account of this kind of miracle, rather than others, since these preliminary triumphs over death, in the view of the writer, were all cast into the shade by our Lord's own resurrection, who was never again to be subject to its power. These temporary resuscitations, however wonderful themselves, were events of a far lower kind, and only pledges of that Divine power over the grave, of which the true seal was given in the resurrection of Jesus. Two other reasons may be given, why the Apostle, assuming him to be the author, should prefer to record the raising of the ruler's daughter, even while equally cognizant of the other occurrence. For the request of the ruler seems to have been made to our Lord, when he was in or near to Matthew's house ; while the public office of Jairus would be a motive for recording this miracle, rather than the other, in a gospel designed for Jewish readers.

But there is another token that St. Matthew was acquainted with the facts recorded in St. Luke, which we find in xi. 5, in the answer of our Lord to the Baptist's messengers. For surely the writer who puts the words into the mouth of Jesus, as a proof of his Divine mission, "the dead are raised," must have known, or professed to know, more than one solitary instance of such a resuscitation. Nor is this conclusion affected by the circumstance, which we gather from St. Luke, that the reply to the messengers took place before the raising of the ruler's daughter. Not only the past, but the future miracles of this kind, would be present to the mind of Jesus when he so spake, and to the mind of the Evangelist, when the speech was put on record. The apparent congruity of his gospel is maintained by the previous mention of the miracle, wrought on the daughter of Jairus. But when the true order of time was restored, as in St. Mark and St. Luke, it was natural, either to omit the message and the reply, or to narrate some instance of that special exercise of

Divine power, to which appeal was made. St. Mark, in harmony with the plan of his gospel, has omitted the discourse of Jesus and the Baptist's message. St. Luke, whose plan leads him to retain it, almost unaltered, and only to restore its true place, has thus a double motive for adding the miracle at Nain. It preceded the message by a short interval, and was one occasion of its being sent, while it must have been the real object of the allusion, in those words of the answer—"The dead are raised." While we can thus explain, by a special reason, the selection of this miracle for public record in the third gospel, the writer gives us every pledge that could be desired of its historical reality, and leaves us no alternative of myth or legend. We have plainly a true history, or a wicked and deliberate lie. The time of the journey was the day after the healing of the centurion's servant. The place, Nain, a well known town of Galilee, which retains its name to the present day. The companions were numerous. The miracle was public and open, so that our Lord might well appeal to it in his reply to the Baptist's message. The circumstances are all in keeping with a Jewish funeral. The tone is one of Divine compassion; and there is a heavenly beauty in the simple address, which a lying fabricator would never have attained. The message of the Baptist soon followed; and then, apparently while still at Nain, a Pharisee invites Jesus to dine with him, and another incident, of equal pathos and beauty, occurs in the course of the meal. Then follows at once that circuit of Jesus, along with the twelve, in the prospect of which he seems to have set them apart, before he left Capernaum on this journey. There is here every feature of simple, connected, and authentic history.

Still more serious reasons of disbelief, it is said, attach themselves to the third history, the raising of Lazarus, which is found only in the fourth gospel. First, if the three other Evangelists had known of it, they could not avoid introducing it in their writings; since of the three it is the most wonderful, and the best fitted for their object, to confirm the Divine mission of Jesus. Next, according to the fourth gospel, it had a direct influence on

the fatal catastrophe of our Lord's death, since the credit thus gained led to the consultation of the Sanhedrim, in which the counsel of Caiaphas prevailed. The two opposite excuses for their silence, that the history was in every mouth, and that danger would result to Lazarus and his family, are said, with some truth, to neutralize each other. The two explanations, that St. Matthew omitted it because he felt unequal to represent it with due tenderness of feeling, or that the three Evangelists were ignorant of it, because they were not, according to this set of critics, apostles, are also dismissed, as they deserve, without ceremony. Other objections are urged of a moral kind, that the delay of Jesus in coming to Bethany, for the purpose of enhancing the miracle, is arbitrary and unreasonable; that the misconception of the disciples is unnatural, after the similar phrase in the raising of the ruler's daughter; that the appeal of the Jews to the cure of the blind, is a presumption against the previous resuscitations; that the words, verse 42, are unnatural, and reduce the prayer to a mere accommodation; and finally, that the whole might arise simply out of the Jewish notion, that it would be one of the signs of the Messiah, to raise the dead.

The first reason, from the silence of the three other gospels, derives its chief weight from the current hypothesis of modern critics, that they are loose, irregular selections of anecdotes, without any regard to the order of time. But the view of their relations, which has been already established, removes the difficulty. We find that the two first writers confined themselves to the Galilean ministry, which lasted from the spring of the first to the summer or autumn of the third year, and then pass on to the close of the last journey, and the visit to Jerusalem; and that St. Luke follows the same track, but treats the later portion more briefly, so as to introduce a full account of the whole of that latest journey, beginning with the mission of the seventy disciples, among whom were probably some of the eye-witnesses and ministers from whom his information was drawn in this part of the history. On the other hand, St. John, writing later, chiefly records the

occurrences in Judea, which were episodes to the main course of our Lord's ministry. Now it results naturally from this principle of selection, that the account of Lazarus would appear in the fourth gospel alone, and no suspicion can be justly drawn from the silence of the others. They could not insert it, without departing from the unity of their own plan; and a single incident, thus inserted, would have been still more exposed, than their actual silence, to the sinister interpretation of infidel criticism. Still, there are links of historical connexion between their statements and the narrative of St. John. The woman, who anointed Jesus, is described in the two first gospels, as of peculiar notoriety among the early Christians, and the fourth gospel states her to have been Mary the sister of Lazarus. Again, St. Luke records the peculiar love of Mary, and her sister Martha, towards our Lord, their rapt attention and eager hospitality; and thus the account in St. John links itself with the facts related by his predecessors, while one of these facts was itself of especial publicity, and the least suited for the purposes of unscrupulous invention. Nor, again, would it consist with the simplicity of the sacred writers, to single out isolated incidents, purely on account of their miraculous character, when the whole life of our Lord supplied them with copious materials, and the crowning miracle, his own resurrection to glory, was common alike to each narrative.

The objection from the delay of Jesus, though sanctioned by such a writer as Lücke, who has recourse to a strained hypothesis to remove it, has no weight whatever. A truth, latent in the ordinary course of our Lord's miracles, is merely stated in a more explicit form. It is by no means true that, even in the other gospels, no instance occurs of a designed preparation for the exhibitions of miraculous power. After the miracle of the loaves, our Lord constrained his disciples to enter into the ship, while he dismissed the multitudes, and then retired into the mountain, in evident preparation for the striking miracle that followed. The very supposition, that such works of Divine power were left, so to speak, to depend on passing incidents, and

not specially ordered by Divine wisdom, with a view to their final purpose, the glory of Christ, is highly unreasonable, and from the gospel point of view, utterly impossible and absurd. And hence it is most natural that this previous foresight of Divine wisdom, which was in constant exercise, should once or twice become patent on the face of the narrative, as in the delay which occasioned the death of Lazarus, and thus prepared the way for his miraculous resurrection.

Again, the misconception of the disciples is in entire keeping with their conduct, not only in the fourth, but in the three other gospels. Its explanation is therefore to be found in the real facts of their mental history, and not, as the objector would infer, in the peculiar style of the fourth Evangelist, as a mere inventor of cunningly-devised fables. It is only by slow degrees that dull and carnal minds rise to the apprehension of spiritual truths. The vain reasonings of the critic against the possibility of a resurrection, are the best excuse for slowness of the disciples in expecting its real occurrence. The instance which had last occurred, so far as the gospels teach us, took place at Capernaum, nearly a year and a half before ; and the interval of time, with the greatness of the miracle implied in the words of Jesus, would be enough to explain their misapprehension of his meaning.

But the appeal of the Jews to the cure of the blind man is urged as a reason, either for rejecting this account, or the previous miracles in Galilee. Why should they not appeal to the two cases, really parallel, which had occurred before, rather than to a miracle quite different ? This objection, however, when fairly weighed, is a new evidence for the truth of the history. For miracles, in their very nature, are appeals to the senses of men, and the impression they leave, on all but a few reflecting spirits, depends on their being actually witnessed, or their recent occurrence, far more than on their absolute greatness. Now the later of the two previous miracles of resuscitation had occurred in Galilee, at the interval of a year and several months ; but the cure of the blind man, at Jerusalem, within a mile or two of Bethany, and

less than three months had passed since its occurrence. It had also been the subject of a formal inquiry by the Sanhedrim, and hence was every way likely to suggest itself prominently to these Jews at Bethany, to whom the words are ascribed. The other two miracles, besides their remoteness, had received no such formal attestation, and it is very uncertain whether the report of them had reached the ears of this particular company, who seem to have been all of them inhabitants of Jerusalem. The objection, from the words of the thanksgiving, is still more plainly a mere presumptuous cavil. There was a moral reason, of the simplest kind, why our Lord should connect this striking miracle with an audible thanksgiving to the Father. The feeling would have been equally real, whether uttered or unexpressed; but the public utterance of it was here profitable and reasonable, and our Lord is only careful to guard his hearers from a false impression, as though his thanksgiving for the present acceptance of his prayers were an implied admission of their repeated failure at other times. There must be extreme perverseness, either in the heart or understanding, to discover in this simple passage any proof that the thanksgiving is fictitious, or the writer guilty of inventing a deliberate lie.

If now we review the three miracles, in their connexion with each other, the evidences of their truth are striking and conclusive. The raising of the ruler's daughter is recorded by three witnesses, of whom the first, by his own description, seems to have been present at the time the request was made, in or near to his own home. It is linked, in all of them, with a second miracle, which occurred on the way to the ruler's house. St. Mark and St. Luke add further incidents, which substantially confirm the statement of Matthew, but correct the impression we should naturally have drawn from his briefer report, that the ruler knew of his daughter's actual death, when his request was made. They tell us his name and office, the age of his daughter, and that she was his only child, the names of the three disciples, who alone were present, the gesture and words of Jesus, and the

direction that food should be given her on her recovery ; while they also restore its place in the order of time, just after crossing the sea of Galilee, when the tempest was stilled, and before the later visit to Nazareth, and the public mission of the twelve Apostles. The second miracle, it is true, is found in St. Luke only, but with peculiar marks of historical accuracy. It occurred at Nain, of which the name still continues to this day, after a journey, on the morrow after the healing of the centurion's servant, at the gate of the city, in the company of many disciples, and of the whole funeral company of mourners. The report of it, being carried to the Baptist in person, with other miracles, seems to have been the occasion for his message, which the first and third gospels report in the same words. It is alluded to by our Lord in his reply, as one proof of His Divine mission, while the same chapter reports another incident that followed the message, which equally bears the marks of historical accuracy and intimate knowledge, and which serves, along with the miracle at Nain, to restore the message of the Baptist to its true place, in the regular order of the sacred history. The last miracle belongs to a period of time, which is omitted in the plan of the other gospels, and where an hiatus may be clearly traced in their outline. It is linked with two of them by the anointing at Bethany, and with the third, by the account of Martha and Mary. It connects itself with the previous narrative by the fears of the disciples, v. 8, occasioned by the attempt to stone our Lord at the feast of dedication, and with the following events, by the consultation of the Sanhedrim. It links itself with the gospel of St. Luke by the stay at Ephraim, which would lead to a journey through Samaria, before our Lord's formal departure, in a public manner, from Galilee to Jerusalem. It reveals a consistency of character, in the desponding tone of Thomas, so agreeable to his later unbelief, in the forward love of Martha, and the quiet, retiring affection of Mary, in the dignity and tenderness of Jesus, and in the questionings of the unbelieving Jews ; while the tone of simple pathos, which pervades the whole, bespeaks in every sentence

the truth of the narrative, and the glory of that Divine Saviour, whose power, tenderness, and majesty of love it so plainly sets before us. In reading it, the mists of doubt, which laborious ignorance and presumption would raise to obscure its beauty, disappear from our view; and it stands forth before the awakened conscience, a manifest message of holy love and saving mercy, where the glory of God is revealed to dying sinners in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord.

CHAPTER II.

THE LAST VISIT TO JERUSALEM.

FROM the arrival of our Lord at Bethany, until the morning of the resurrection, the narrative of the four Evangelists is in substantial, though not in verbal agreement. The events recorded, with a few exceptions, are the same ; but the diversity of form is sufficient to prove that they did not copy implicitly from each other, and vindicates their claim to be distinct and authentic witnesses. The substance of their narrative is further confirmed by many allusions in the writings of St. Paul, and the Acts of the Apostles, where the same facts, and even many of the details, are assumed to be familiarly known, and most surely believed by the great body of early Christians.

There is no part of the gospel history, where the mythical hypothesis betrays more thoroughly its inherent falsehood, since the intense reality of a record of real events is stamped upon every sentence of the Divine record, in these days of our Lord's sufferings. But since these variations, which are really a pledge of the independent authority of the four Evangelists, have been urged as proofs that they are alike the inventors or retailers of mere fables, and they are thus charged, under smooth and gentle phrases, with the most hateful and aggravated wickedness, it becomes needful to repel the honied blasphemies, by which their veracity is assailed, and to show how utterly futile are the grounds on which the charge has been brought against them. Nothing, indeed, in the shape of criticism, is more surprizing than the air of calm, candid inquiry, and superior penetration,

by which reasonings and statements, the most preposterous, have recently been disguised. It will be convenient to notice the main objections, urged by the mythical theorists, in the order of the events themselves.

1. The three first gospels mention that Jesus, on his last approach to Jerusalem, when opposite Bethphage and Bethany, sent two disciples, to procure the colt on which he rode into the city. St. John tells us that he arrived at Bethany six days before the Passover, where he stayed one night, and perhaps a day also, and then rode on the ass's colt into Jerusalem. The two statements are said to contradict each other. The arrival of Jesus near the villages, the sending of the disciples, and the bringing of the ass, are affirmed to be too closely consecutive, to allow the insertion of a night's residence in Bethany; while the late hour of the arrival in the city, in St. Mark, is to be explained only by the long journey, the same day, from Jericho.

All this, however, is mere assumption, without the least shew of evidence. For the three Evangelists have not recorded the resting-place of Jesus for one single night, during this journey, at Jericho any more than at Bethany. St. Matthew and St. Mark indicate no stay whatever at Jericho, but St. Luke mentions a sojourn, of some hours at least, at the house of Zaccheus. A similar stay at Bethany, the following night, is therefore equally consistent with their common narrative. There is nothing in their words, to prove that the colt was sent for before Jesus arrived at Bethany, but the contrary, when the following verses are compared with each other.

Matt. xxi. 1. "And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the Mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two of his disciples, saying, Go unto the village over against you."

Mark xi. 1. "And when they come nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples."

Luke xix. 28, 29. "And when he had thus spoken he went

before, ascending up to Jerusalem. And it came to pass, when he drew nigh, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called the Mount of Olives," &c.

In all these statements the meaning is evidently the same, that the disciples were sent forth when Jesus was near to Jerusalem, and already arrived at or opposite the two villages, Bethphage and Bethany, and the Mount of Olives. And hence they are fully consistent with the statement of St. John, that the colt was provided, after Jesus had spent a night and part of a day at Bethany.

The statement in St. Mark, that after Jesus had reached the temple, and looked round about on all things, the evening was come, by no means justifies the conclusion that he had left Jericho the same day. On the contrary, such a view is most improbable, if we merely consider the distance, almost twenty miles, the multitudes by whom he was attended, the probable delays on the road, the mission of the disciples to procure the colt, the character of the procession, which must have been slow from the crowds who attended it, and the excitement produced in the whole city. The time denoted by the word, *οψια*, began about three in the afternoon, and is quite consistent with probability, even if the night had been spent at Bethany, since publicity was the main object of our Lord in the procession of that day. Indeed the statements in the three first gospels, that Jesus retired to Bethany each evening, are an evident coincidence with the statement of St. John, that he stayed in that village before his entrance into Jerusalem.

2. St. Matthew states, next, that the two disciples found a she-ass tied, and a colt with her; that they brought them both to Jesus, spread their garments over them, and set him upon them. The three other Evangelists mention only the colt, both in the message of the disciples, and the actual procession. Here the charge has been made against the first gospel, of giving an incongruous description, as if our Lord rode both animals together; and further, that this error arose from a misconstruction

of Zech. ix. 9, so that the writer has fitted his narrative to a false version of the prophecy. By this error, it is affirmed, the author of the first gospel forfeits irrecoverably all claim to the character of an eye-witness.

Now in reality, the circumstance mentioned by St. Matthew is naturally implied in the statement of the other gospels. Our Lord there instructs the disciples that they will find a colt tied, "whereon never man sat." But how could this fact be palpable to the disciples, or to others who heard the message, unless the colt were unweaned, and along with its mother? If the message was given, exactly as recorded by St. Mark and St. Luke, then the statement of St. Matthew is just that dramatic paraphrase which only an eye-witness would be likely to give. The description of the colt, that no man had ever sat upon it, was made a sensible fact to the disciples by the presence of its mother; and an eye-witness, to whom the scene was fresh, especially if he did not hear the words of the message, but expounded it by the event, would be likely to record it just as it appears in the first gospel. On the other hand, St. Mark, writing from the information of Peter himself, to whom the words were addressed, would be likely to give them with verbal accuracy, and to specify only the exact fulfilment of the charge, really given to the two disciples, in which the colt alone was mentioned. The accounts are thus reconciled in a way, which only confirms the claim of the first gospel to be written by an actual eye-witness.

The other explanation proposed, that the statement arose from a false construction of the prophecy, is most unreasonable. For the first gospel evinces throughout a peculiar acquaintance with the habits of Jewish thought, and hence an ignorance of Hebrew idiom is more unlikely here, than in the other gospels. Again, the translation is different from the Septuagint, and more literal; but the word, *ass*, which is repeated in our version, retains the same distinctness in the gospel as in the prophecy, "sitting upon an ass, and a colt the son of a beast of burden." Nay, the very departure from the Septuagint implies the

accurate discrimination of the writer. For the loose version “*υπόζυγιον και πωλον νεον*,” applies the description “a beast of burden” to the colt itself, on which no burden had yet been laid; while the more exact version in the gospel transfers the title to the mother, in which application it is really appropriate.

The only difficulty that remains lies in the statement, that the garments were placed both on the colt and its mother, and that Jesus sat upon them. And here the explanation, from an *enallage numeri*, is simple in itself, and agreeable to several examples in the same gospel. The difficulty still urged, that there was no reason why both should be sent for, if only one was to be used, has no force whatever. The presence of the she-ass, the mother of the colt, was a visible pledge that the colt answered to our Lord’s own description, and to the true meaning of the prophecy, and was really one on which no man had ridden before.

If now we compare the narratives again, the features of reality are conspicuous, even in their slight divergencies from each other. St. Matthew, the earliest writer, gives the incident as it appeared to the eye, in its composite and dramatic form. St. Mark, informed probably by St. Peter of the exact words of Jesus, which were repeated to the owners, mentions only the colt, and records the message itself, and its punctual repetition. St. Luke follows the later and more exact statement. St. John, writing still later, omits all details, and notices the event, chiefly for the sake of one important remark, “These things understood not his disciples at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.” Not only the substance of the narrative, but the variation of its form, confirms the authenticity of all the four gospels.

3. The accounts of the cleansing of the temple, and of the cursing of the barren fig-tree, come next in order, and are closely connected in the two first gospels. The minor differences only serve to illustrate the relation of St. Mark to the previous Evan-

gelist, whose statements he clears up and explains, when they are at all ambiguous. Thus the two events are recorded separately in the first gospel, because each of them possesses a moral unity. But St. Mark restores carefully, here as elsewhere, the exact order of time. The sentence on the fig-tree thus appears to have preceded the cleansing of the temple, though its fulfilment, and the remark of the disciples, occurred on the morning of the next day. By this means, not only the true sequence is made evident, but the word "immediately," in St. Matthew, receives its true explication. To suppose the withering effected on the moment would be, in the abstract, an unlikely construction; for the words of Jesus did not directly portend such a change, but were only a sentence of future barrenness. Hence the withering of the tree in one single day was a singularly rapid fulfilment of the doom pronounced upon it. St. Matthew has grouped together the incidents of two successive mornings, on the return from Bethany, because of their historical unity, while the second gospel restores each of them to its proper place. Such a correction of the arrangement, while the whole substance of the narrative is unaltered, is one of the surest marks of historical veracity.

But the words in St. Mark, descriptive of the fig-tree, have caused much difficulty, and given rise to specious objections. If the time of figs was not yet, why should the fig-tree, even in symbol, be cursed for a natural result of the yearly seasons? To remove this objection, many glosses and forced translations have been proposed, which are justly to be set aside as untenable. The simplest explanation, however, is the most consistent, and agrees best with the real scope of the passage. The words affirm simply, of that particular tree, that it was not a time of fig-bearing. Other trees might be already in fruit, or the same tree might have borne fruit earlier or later in the year; but for the present, it had a deceptive appearance, being covered with leaves, and no fruit to be found upon it. It was thus the most fitting

symbol that could have been devised, to represent the actual state and impending doom of the Jewish people.

The statement of St. Mark has been charged with folly, as hastily invented to account for the absence of fruit, while it makes the conduct of Jesus morally inexplicable. But the charge is manifestly quite groundless. If the tree were barren already, the sentence would have had no meaning—"Let no fruit grow on thee henceforth for ever." Hence it is implied, even in the first gospel, that the absence of fruit was a result of the season, and not of permanent barrenness. The symbolical force of the miracle is only increased by this explanation. The character of the tree, forward in leaves, but tardy in fruit-bearing, procured its doom. And thus, while the more immediate purpose of the miracle was to confirm the faith of the disciples by a new instance of the power of Christ, it answered the further design of predicting, by an expressive emblem, the curse about to light on the Jewish nation.

4. The discourses that follow, until the close of our Lord's public ministry, abound in marks of historical truth. Even the most determined and systematic adversary of the Evangelists has found only one passage, on which to ground, with any plausibility, a charge of contradiction. The question of the scribe, it is urged, is put, according to St. Matthew, in a hostile and malevolent spirit; while in St. Mark it is just the reverse. The differences, it is said, are not slighter than those which distinguish both passages from Luke x. 25—37; and since three distinct occurrences, so nearly alike, are incredible, they must all be varied and defective traditions of one and the same event.

The asserted resemblance, however, to the account in St. Luke, is most unreal; and the attempt to confound two events, so totally distinct, is evidently futile. For St. Luke himself notes the presence and assent of the scribes on the very same occasion, where the conversation with one of them is recorded in the first and second gospels. In the other event, which he places much earlier, every feature is different. A different

question is proposed ; our Lord, instead of giving a direct reply, proposes another question ; the lawyer himself repeats the great commandment, and then starts a new difficulty, which our Lord resolves by the parable of the Good Samaritan. Hence in time, place, character, and details, no two events could well vary more widely, than the conversation in St. Luke varies from the account in the two other Evangelists.

The contrast in the tone and purpose of the scribe, in St. Mark and St. Matthew, is just as untrue as the asserted resemblance to the passage in St. Luke. The exact force of the term, *πειράζων*, must plainly depend on the context. When a question was put on the lawfulness of tribute, it would imply, as the writers expound it, a malevolent design to entrap our Saviour, and make him odious to the governor or to the people. But the question—"Which is the first and great command?" naturally implies a trial of a far less malignant kind, a curious desire to test our Lord's wisdom, or discover the real nature of his teaching. It would imply, therefore, a mixture of curiosity and suspicion. But when the reply approved itself to the conscience of the scribe, it was natural that curiosity should be followed by seriousness, and his former suspicious feelings subside into a kind of imperfect reverence for the wisdom of Jesus. The two statements are therefore in complete harmony. St. Mark, after his usual manner, unfolds the incident at greater length than St. Matthew thought necessary, and proves by fresh details, at once consistent and original, his own independent information.

5. The Prophecy of our Lord on the Mount of Olives forms the next main portion of the sacred history. Here the objection, chiefly raised, is of a different kind, and does not affect the veracity of the record, but the truth of the prophecy itself. It clearly announces, according to the objectors, that the Second Coming of Jesus in the clouds of heaven would occur immediately after the siege of Jerusalem, and during the generation in which it was uttered. Three different alternatives, by which this conclusion, so fatal to our Lord's prophetic character, is

avoided, are then examined, and each of them is pronounced untenable.

This objection, if well founded, would force us to one of two admissions; that our Lord himself was fallible, and actually deceived; or that the Evangelists are unfaithful witnesses of his real predictions, and the gospels an imperfect and erroneous history.

The adverse criticism, when it maintains that the whole discourse cannot be referred, without violence, either to the destruction of the Jewish state, or to the end of the world, seems to be just, and sustained by clear evidence. But when it maintains, further, that the prophecy excludes the idea of any long interval between these events, and fixes them both within the existing generation, it lies open, not only to serious doubt, but to a distinct refutation.

It is indeed quite evident that the discourse, as recorded by St. Matthew and St. Mark, makes no formal disclosure of any long interval between the earlier and the later event. Such a disclosure would then have been premature, and contrary to the spirit of our Lord's repeated warnings. But in the later gospel of St. Luke, though written before the fall of Jerusalem,—and if the previous reasonings are just, nearly twenty years earlier,—the fact of an interval is briefly, but plainly expressed. "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." There is thus a provision made, in this third and later edition of the prophecy, for the admission of that very interval which the Providence of God has since expanded into eighteen centuries; and the events of our own days seem to be furnished with fresh evidence of the truth of the prophecy, by their correspondence with the verses that follow.

If we use the words of this gospel as a key to explain the two others, they clearly indicate that the transition is found in verse 22 of St. Matthew, and verse 20 of St. Mark, where our Lord alludes to the shortening of the days. If we explain the words to mean, a suspense of the severity of the trial, while

Jerusalem remains trodden down, until the crisis is resumed at the close of the times of the Gentiles, the three accounts are harmonized together, and the actual interval, though for wise reasons not revealed at the time, is seen to be really implied in the sacred message.

To this explanation, the main objection that will be opposed is the thirty-fourth verse. The word *γενεα*, it is affirmed, in such a context, must necessarily denote the then living generation, and that this is assigned as the limit, within which the whole prophecy must be fulfilled. The verse that follows, it is urged, does not introduce any exception to this universal statement, but only affirms that the precise moment, the day and the hour of the second coming, was not to be revealed.

There can be no doubt that the construction of *γενεα*, on which this objection partly rests, is the most simple and natural. The verse has evidently the character of a mark of time, and assigns the events to the actual generation, then already begun. But the construction of the day and the hour is by no means equally natural. To suppose that a day of twenty-four hours, and a particular hour of that day, is intended, contradicts the usage of Scripture, and the instinctive sense of every thoughtful reader. "The day" is plainly the great day of the Lord, or the period of the second coming, and cannot be justly referred to one natural day alone. Again, the hour, in the same context, must either be an equivalent to "the season," as implied in the parable of the Fig-tree, or the figurative hour of the night, as expounded in the parable of the Householder, that immediately follows. And hence the contrast of the pronouns, "all *these* things," in the one passage, and "*that* day and hour," in the other, leads naturally to the idea of two sets of events, distinct, though connected, of which the first alone is assigned to that generation, while the time of the other is emphatically declared to be unknown and unrevealed.

It confirms this interpretation, that in St. Matthew two questions are proposed—"When shall these things be, and what

shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Also, down to verse 19, where the doom of Jerusalem is announced, one pronoun is used, but afterwards the other. Thus verse 8—"All these things are the beginning of sorrows." Verse 14—"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world." But afterwards—"Woe to them that give suck in those days." verse 19. Verse 22—"Except those days were shortened, there should no flesh be saved." Verse 29—"Immediately after the tribulation of those days." There is thus an evident distinction of nearer and more remote events, of which one class are named before, the others after, the compassing of Jerusalem. And hence we may infer, with the strongest reason, that the expression, "all these things," corresponds strictly with the first inquiry of the disciples, and terminates with the fall of the temple, when one stone would not be left upon another; but the contrasted phrase, "that day and that hour," relates to the coming of Christ and its attendant troubles, which are parted in St. Luke from the rest of the prophecy, and of which the time is excepted from the previous statement, being solemnly declared to be hidden deep in the secret counsel of God.

It may still be urged, that the construction which naturally results from the whole discourse, is of the return of Jesus in glory, within the limits of the actual generation, or soon after the overthrow of the temple, and that this has been completely falsified by the events, so that our Lord was either ignorant of the truth, or purposely deceived his followers. But this objection overlooks the plain fact, that our Lord enforces the duty of continual watchfulness, and expressly refuses a definition of the time. The whole discourse implies that his return might possibly take place in that very generation, or might possibly be long delayed; (Matt. xxv. 19,) that God had reserved the time in His own keeping; that the Saviour himself was not commissioned to reveal it, and that whether it was near or remote, was a mystery which only the event could unfold. A revelation thus

limited, could only appear in the actual form. Events, certainly to occur in that generation, would be first narrated in their order, and the Advent with its attendant circumstances, be appended at the close, without any precise indication of the unknown interval, which it was neither intended nor desirable then to reveal.

But a further objection has been raised, from the comparative silence of the fourth gospel upon the visible Advent. It has been alleged to be inconceivable that the writer, if an Apostle, could have passed over so important a feature in the public teaching of our Lord; and it is inferred that this gospel had its rise in an Hellenistic and theosophic school of thought, in which the idea had been divested of its material form. But the closing verses of the gospel exclude this critical fiction. The words there recorded—"If I will that he tarry till I come," evidently imply the notoriety of this very doctrine, of the return of Jesus, both when they were uttered, and at the date of the composition. It was a great principle, assumed by the writer to be fully known, and which required no further explanation. The comparative silence respecting it, in the course of the gospel, is easily explained by the fact that the writer had received, just before, a series of visions, which he had sent to the same churches, and in which this great truth received its fullest development.

6. The next events to be considered are the anointing at Bethany, and the treachery of Judas. Here there is a divergence in the apparent order of the events between the two first and the fourth gospels. Other difficulties have been started, produced by an attempt to confound the anointing in Bethany with the earlier one in St. Luke, as varied and defective traditions of the same event. Hence three topics have to be considered; the time of the anointing by Mary, its distinctness from the one which took place in the house of Simon the Pharisee, and its connexion with the treachery of Judas, with the historical consistency of the whole narrative.

In St. Matthew and St. Mark, the anointing is mentioned after the consultation of the chief-priests, which is placed two

days before the Passover, and immediately before the treachery of Judas. But in St. John it occurs rather earlier, after the arrival at Bethany, six days before the Passover, during a supper which they made for him, at which Lazarus was present, and one or two days before the public entrance into Jerusalem. That this is its true place in the history seems proved by the definition of time which follows, John xii. 12—"The next day much people that were come to the feast . . . took branches of palm-trees," &c. On the other hand, the incident is isolated in the two other gospels, and nothing forbids the idea of a reversion in the narrative to events a few days earlier, of which the consequences and the significance now began to appear. The statement of St. Matthew is as follows: "It came to pass when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples, Ye know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified. Then were assembled the chief-priests," &c. "Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, there came to him a woman, having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head as he sat at meat. . . . Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief-priests . . . and from that time he sought opportunity to betray him." The account in St. Mark is nearly the same. "Now the Passover, and the unleavened bread was after two days, and the chief-priests and the scribes were seeking how they might take him by craft, and put him to death; but they said, Not in the feast, lest there be an uproar of the people. And he being in Bethany," &c. And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief-priests, to betray him unto them."

Neither the arrangement of these gospels, nor that of St. John, involves in itself any real difficulty. One Evangelist, having brought our Lord to Bethany, and not designing to mention the place again, might insert the incident a little before the time of its occurrence. On the other hand, St. Matthew and St. Mark, when about to record the treachery of Judas, and the crucifixion and burial of Jesus, might revert to this earlier event,

which gave occasion to the traitor's wicked purpose, and contained a touching prophecy, by our Lord, of his approaching death. But since the historical connexion is much closer in St. John, there seems little doubt that he has restored the true order, and that there is a slight trajection in the two other gospels. The reason of the inversion is very plain, since the incident would be totally isolated, and break the order of the narrative, if it were inserted at the opening of Matt. xxi. or of Mark xi. which would be the chronological place, as deduced from the history in the fourth gospel. The interval between the event, and the actual treachery of Judas, forms no real objection. The rebuke he received could only have been a secondary motive of his crime, while the chief one was evidently the backwardness of our Lord, even after his public entrance into the city, to assume temporal power, and distribute honours and rewards to his disciples. His covetous desires were thwarted by this delay, and he hastened to make his peace with the opposite party, as soon as he suspected that the inactivity of Jesus would lead to their triumph.

The attempt to confound this anointing at Bethany with that recorded by St. Luke, and thus to involve all the records of it in uncertainty and confusion, is really preposterous. Except the name of the host, and the fact of the anointing, there is in every other feature an absolute contrast. The time differs more than a year and half, and is clearly defined in each case. The anointing in St. Luke took place after John's message, and before the circuit, which closed with the parable of the sower, and the stilling of the tempest on the sea of Galilee. The anointing in Bethany was punctually on the Friday or Saturday evening, before our Lord's death. The woman, in St. Luke, was a notorious sinner, or one branded with open immorality; in the other case, Mary, the sister of Lazarus, a character marked everywhere by faith, purity, and love. The host, in one case, is a Pharisee and a stranger; in the other, Martha herself is the entertainer, and her brother Lazarus one who sits at meat with Jesus. The anointing, in St. Luke, is of the feet alone,

but Mary anointed both the feet and head, or virtually, the whole body beforehand for burial. The plentiful tears of the woman are the main feature, in one case ; but no mention occurs of any such tears in the other. The murmuring, in one case, is of the host against our Lord himself, for suffering such a woman to touch him ; in the other, it is Judas and the disciples, who complain of the woman for her excessive prodigality. The rebuke and the promise differ just as widely. In one case there is simply an assurance of pardon for many sins ; in the other, of lasting honour for a work of love to the Saviour. That such a token of love and reverence should be twice offered to Jesus in the course of a three years' ministry, cannot, with any shew of reason, be thought improbable ; and the main action being the same, no two events could be more thoroughly in contrast with each other. Even the place is widely different, since the former anointing evidently occurred somewhere in Galilee, either at Nain or one of the adjoining cities.

The variations between the account of St. John, and the two other gospels, unlike those just examined, are slight and evanescent. The anointing of the head is mentioned in one case, of the feet in the other ; but the words of Jesus reconcile the two partial statements. "She is come beforehand to anoint my body for the burial." The anointing of the head denoted the friendship of Mary for Jesus, as an honoured guest ; the anointing of the feet, her own sense of unworthiness, as a forgiven sinner. The union of both could alone fully express the relation of the family of Bethany to their Divine Saviour and gracious Friend. The estimated worth of the ointment, in St. Mark and St. John, is the same, and comes to light in the same manner, by the murmuring of the disciples. The allusion in John xi. 2 proves how notorious the event had become, when the fourth gospel was written, and thus agrees with the promise which the two other Evangelists have put on record. The allusion to his own burial, which our Lord makes in his reply, fixes the time of the event

to his last visit, and thus confirms the truth of the whole statement.

It has been urged, as a double objection to the truth of the narrative, that the host, in one gospel, is Lazarus, and in the two others, Simon the Leper; and that if St. Matthew and St. Mark had known Mary and Judas to be the two parties concerned, their names could not have been passed over in silence. The former statement is untrue. St. John tells us, indeed, that Lazarus sat at meat with Jesus; but this description could not apply to the host, but to one of the guests who were present in a different capacity; while the house might belong to Simon the Leper, either as husband to Martha at the time of the event, or as its actual owner when the gospels were written, in entire consistency with the account in the fourth gospel.

Again, since neither Martha nor Mary is named in the two first gospels, the name of the latter, without a digression, would have answered no purpose of instruction. The anointing itself, as we may infer alike from each writer, was the distinction by which she was most honourably and widely known; but the name was too common to be any distinction whatever. If this woman, it is said, were Mary of Bethany, how could the event be severed from so celebrated a name? The objection springs only from a childish illusion, since it was this very anointing which gave her celebrity. Hence it is natural that it should first be recorded alone, as her chief honour; and afterwards the subordinate circumstances, that her name was Mary, her home at Bethany, and her brother Lazarus, who was raised from the dead. In like manner, if several disciples joined in the cure, there would be no reason why Judas alone should be mentioned in the earlier and simpler account, while some connexion between the fact and his treachery seems implied by the order of the narrative. Indeed this connexion, as explained by the fourth gospel, is a clear example of undesigned coincidence, which derives all its force from the omission of his name in the earlier gospels.

7. The next, and more serious inconsistency, alleged against this part of the narrative, relates to the time of the Passover, and of the last supper. According to the three first evangelists, our Lord partook of the Passover on its appointed day, and in the evening before he suffered. But according to St. John, the Passover was still future at the hour of his condemnation, and took place on the Friday when he suffered. The problem, how to reconcile these statements, has divided critics and divines, almost in balanced numbers, from the early times of the church until now. Thus, of recent critics and harmonists, Lucke, Meyer, Ideler, Greswell and Browne, refer the crucifixion to the fourteenth of Nisan; but Olshausen, Benson, Jarvis, Wieseler, and Robinson, to the fifteenth, or the first day of unleavened bread, and a similar variety of judgment exists among earlier writers. It is urged, by recent mythical theorists, that the difference is irreconcilable, whence they would infer the fictitious and merely traditional character of all the four narratives.

Viewed as an argument against the historical character of the gospels, this objection is really a positive evidence on the other side. In fictitious narratives, or traditional compilations at a later period, it would have been easy to avoid all dangerous minuteness of detail on the time of the events, or to have adapted the later to the earlier gospels. The circumstance, that the three gospels appear quite consistent with themselves, and that the fourth, evidently written later, seems to vary from them, is only a proof of its independent authority. Neither the agreement nor the divergence is such as would result from fragmentary composition, or from artificial compact among the writers, or the authors of the traditions. The solution of the apparent discrepancy must be sought in some very different explanation.

But a closer inquiry will remove the difficulty, and shew that St. John is really consistent with the other evangelists, in his allusions to the time of the Crucifixion and the Passover. Their

statement is plainly that on the first day of unleavened bread, which St. Mark expounds to be the day when they sacrificed the Passover, and St. Luke more plainly still, the day when it ought to be killed, the disciples asked Jesus where they should prepare the Paschal supper. They followed his directions, and when evening was come, or the proper hour for its celebration, he sat down with the twelve. That it was a Paschal meal is clear from his own words in St. Luke—"With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, for I will not any more eat of it, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Nor do the words of our Lord in St. Matthew prove an anticipation of the proper time. They are occasioned by the inquiry of his disciples, when the day for the feast was already come,—“Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee, to eat the Passover?” To bear the proposed construction, they ought to have preceded such an inquiry. Their real force may be seen, if we remember that our Lord had been absent from the last Passover, and the early part of the Feast of Tabernacles, because of the malice of the Jews, and, during his present visit, had retired from Jerusalem every night, in order to avoid the machinations of his enemies. And hence to celebrate the Passover in the heart of the city, was a resolution explained only by the knowledge that the time of his sufferings was really come.

It is very unlikely in itself that the writer of the fourth gospel, even if he were not the Apostle, would intentionally depart from the consenting statement of three gospels, which must have already gained a wide circulation in the church. A minute analysis of his statements will prove the alleged inconsistency to be only apparent.

The first allusion is in John xi. 55, and only confirms the general fact, that the last visit of Jesus was at the Passover. The second is more precise, John xii. 1, and fixes the arrival at Bethany six days before the feast. The proper time of the feast was the evening, between the fourteenth and fifteenth days, when the sacrifice was offered, and the feast began. Six days earlier,

if Thursday night was the time of the Passover, would answer to the previous Friday evening. It is natural that our Lord should arrange his journey, so as to reach Bethany at sunset on Friday evening, when the rest of the Jewish Sabbath began.

The next statement of time is in xiii. 1. "Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come, &c., and supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him." It has been inferred that this implies the judgment of the writer, that the Passover was held on Friday, and not on Thursday evening. But this is an unwarranted inference. The seven days' feast began with the evening, which followed the fourteenth day, when the Paschal supper was held. And hence an event which took place at the very commencement of that evening, and before the actual participation of the Paschal meal, would answer strictly to the force of the phrase, "before the feast of the Passover." It is clear that the words, "δειπνου γενομενου," should be translated, "supper being come," and that the incident was at its commencement, not at its close. Again, the mention of *supper*, in such a context, implies that it was the Paschal supper, the well known commencement of the seven days' feast.

The next allusion is in the mention of Judas. "Some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast, or that he should give something to the poor." Since the Paschal sacrifice itself only began on the afternoon of the fourteenth day, there would be no need to make purchases late at night, if the evening were that which introduces the fourteenth Jewish day. But if the fourteenth day was past, and the first day of the feast was to dawn with the morrow, the need would be urgent, if any part of the proper supply was still wanting. Hence this hint rather confirms, than disproves, the agreement of St. John with the other evangelists in the time of the feast.

The next mark of time, and that which is usually thought to be most decisive, to prove that St. John places the Passover a

day later, is in xviii. 28. "Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment; and it was early, and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover." It is urged that this phrase can only apply strictly to the Paschal sacrifice itself, and hence that it must have been still future, and held by the Pharisees, not on Thursday, but on Friday evening. It is alleged, on the other hand, by Lightfoot and Dr. Robinson, that the term may be used more loosely for the Chagigah, or thank-offerings of the first day of the unleavened bread, the fifteenth of Nisan.

This solution certainly seems open to much difficulty. To eat the Passover might apply to the Paschal supper, either inclusive or exclusive of other sacrifices in the feast, but could not apply, so far as usage is a guide, to other sacrifices exclusive of that supper. This passage has therefore been always the stronghold of those critics, who maintain, from St. John, the true date to have been Friday evening. But I conceive that the words admit of another explanation, which removes the necessity of any violent departure from general usage, and also brings to light the real emphasis of the phrase. The Apostle tells us that "it was *early*, and they went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover." The whole context proves that it was before the sunrise, though after the cock-crowing, or between three and six in the morning. Now the appointed time for the Paschal supper was the night which followed the fourteenth day. It is true, the chief celebration was in the evening after sunset; but the morning was the limit assigned, after which the remains were to be consumed with fire. It is possible that, in the plan for the seizure of our Lord, some had been delayed from partaking at the usual hour, or that most of them intended, before daybreak, to fulfil the command, "Ye shall let nothing of it remain until morning." And hence the mention of the early hour is emphatic, and serves as a key to the remark. A pollution then contracted would hinder any of them from completing the celebration, by con-

suming the remains of the Paschal supper, before the sun-rise, which was then near at hand. The words are thus a proof that the night of the apprehension was really that of the Paschal celebration.

The next allusion is in the words of Pilate, xviii. 39. "But ye have a custom that I should release unto you one in the Passover." If the day were the fourteenth, the expression would not be strictly true, since the Passover was sacrificed in the afternoon, and the words of Pilate were uttered at day-break. But if the day were the fifteenth of Nisan, the release of the prisoner would punctually concur with the real opening of the feast, or the beginning of the first day of unleavened bread. On the other view the more natural phrase would be, "before the Passover."

In xix. 14, we have another statement, which has been thought to prove the anticipation. "It was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour." This has been expounded, by many critics, "the day before the Passover," that is, the fourteenth of Nisan. But the Evangelist explains his own meaning, in v. 31. "The Jews therefore, that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the Sabbath, since it was the preparation, for the day of that Sabbath was great, besought Pilate that their legs might be broken." "There then, on account of the preparation of the Jews, because the sepulchre was near, they laid Jesus." In the other gospel, the same phrase occurs repeatedly. Matt. xxvii. 62. "Now the next day, which is after the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate." Mark xv. 42. "And when even was already come, since it was the preparation, that is, the fore-sabbath." Luke xxiii. 54. "And the day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on."

From these words of the Evangelists, and the two later passages of the fourth gospel, it is plain that "the preparation" was used elliptically, as an equivalent to Friday, or the day of the week before the Sabbath. This usage was so frequent, that

St. Matthew actually calls the Sabbath itself, "the day after the preparation." St. John evidently uses the term in this sense, and with strict reference to the weekly Sabbath, in both of the later passages where it occurs. He even calls it absolutely "the preparation of the Jews," a term which evidently applies to a period of weekly, and not of annual recurrence. And hence it follows that "the preparation of the Passover" means simply "the Friday of the Passover," or the day of the Passover week before the ordinary Sabbath. On the other construction of these words, and of John xviii. 28, they would convey no fresh information, and be a simple tautology; but nothing has been said before by the Evangelist, to mark the week-day of the occurrence.

The last allusion to be considered has been quoted just before. "For the day of that Sabbath was great," or "a high day." It is urged that this applies only to the coincidence of the common with the extraordinary Sabbath, on the fifteenth of Nisan. But the words, fairly weighed, give no warrant for this construction. St. John tells us, first, that the object of the Jews was "that the bodies might not remain on the Sabbath," where the common weekly Sabbath is evidently meant. He explains the reason of their application "because it was the preparation" where it is just as plain that he means Friday, or the day of the week before the common Sabbath. He then adds, as a further reason for their desire to remove the bodies—"the day of that Sabbath was great." It was specially sacred and solemn, since it was the Sabbath of the Passover-week, and only one such Sabbath could occur in each year. This would render it specially sacred to the Jews, whatever the day of the festival on which it happened to fall. Indeed, if we consult the Scriptures alone, the first and seventh days of the feast never once receive the name of Sabbath, but only that of holy convocations, and the time of Pentecost is properly reckoned from the morrow after the Sabbath in the Passover-week, and not from the sixteenth of Nisan, as is proved from Lev. xxiii. 16, where the feast of Pentecost is

referred expressly to "the morrow after the seventh Sabbath." But the seventh recurrence of the week-day on which Nisan 15 might fall, would not be a Sabbath, either ordinary or extraordinary. And hence, by the very tenor of the law of Moses, the Sabbath in Passover-week, whatever its place in the festival, would be eminently "a high day."

It results, from this whole inquiry, that there is no real discrepancy between St. John and the other Evangelists; that our Lord arrived at Bethany on Friday evening, just six days before the time of the last supper; that at the opening of the Paschal meal, when the festival itself was still future, but just ready to begin with that very supper, he washed the feet of his disciples; that the Pharisees forbore to enter the hall of Pilate, through fear of defilement, because the hour was early, so that the night appointed for eating the lamb of the Passover had not completely closed, and the remains were to be consumed, by the law, before the morning arose; that the time of the crucifixion was the Friday in the Passover-week; that a prisoner was wont to be released in the course of the festival, when it had only just begun, and that the bodies were taken down, because the Sabbath was always sacred, and the one which fell within the Passover-week was of peculiar celebrity.

There is thus no proof that St. John varies from the consenting testimony of the three first gospels, who all make the Thursday night, after sunset, the time of the Paschal supper, and place the type at the beginning, and the antitype at the close of the same Jewish day, the Friday before Easter day. On this view, the three days and nights assigned to our Lord's sufferings, are the three first days and nights of the Passover festival, beginning with the last supper, and ending with the first appearance of Jesus to the Apostles after the resurrection. The comparison, therefore, serves only to establish the truth and consistency of the four gospels, in their various minute allusions to the time of our Lord's death.

The same agreement may be traced in their independent state-

ments, with regard to the events of that last week. Six days before the Passover, St. John tells us, our Lord arrived at Bethany. This would be Friday evening at sunset, when the Sabbath had just begun. On the Sabbath, many Jews resorted to Bethany, which St. Luke places a Sabbath-day's journey from Jerusalem. The next day, which would be the tenth of Nisan, the day when the Paschal lamb was to be set apart for sacrifice, our Lord made his public entry into Jerusalem, delaying it till the afternoon, so as to reach the temple at the hour of the evening sacrifice, at which the Passover was to be slain four days later. The next day, or Monday, St. Mark states that he returned from Bethany, when the second cleansing of the temple occurred. The day following, or Tuesday, occurred the conversation on the fig-tree, and the various parables, in which our Lord denounced the sin and judgment of the Jews. The discourse on the Mount of Olives took place, either the same evening, on his return from the temple for the last time, or the next morning. "After two days was the Passover," the complete interval from one date, or the current interval from the other, since one complete Jewish day intervened before the last supper. Thus the intervals dovetail exactly into each other.

9. The events of the last supper have also been made an occasion for various charges of inconsistency, especially between St. John and the other Evangelists. Some of these are manifestly futile, as for instance, that St. John makes no mention of the institution of the Lord's Supper, nor the others, of the washing of the feet of the disciples. Nothing but the mere perversity of unbelief can make a various selection of incidents a ground for imputing falsehood to any one of the sacred writers. Unless there had been a partial change in the selection of events, the later gospels must have been superfluous and unmeaning. Why, it is asked, should the writer give another account of the miraculous feeding, in which there is no emendation of consequence, and omit the important institution of the Lord's Supper? Such a critical canon is truly ridiculous, that the

statements of a writer shall have no credit, unless we can assign the motives which have led him to retain one incident, and to omit another, in every instance throughout the course of his work. But here abundant reasons may be given why the miracle of the loaves should find a place in the fourth gospel. First of all, it is there made a distinct key to the whole chronology, by the added statement—"The Passover, the feast of the Jews, was nigh." Next, it is connected with many particulars, not recorded elsewhere; the conversation with Philip and Andrew, the conclusion drawn from it by the multitudes, and their wish to take Jesus by force and make him a king. But above all, it is the necessary key to the whole discourse that follows, and which appears only in the fourth gospel. Indeed the part which is common with the previous gospel is hardly more than one tenth of the whole chapter. On the other hand, the reason alleged why St. John should have given an account of the last supper, if his gospel were a supplement to the others, that he might correct their mistake in the time of the event, rests upon an error which has been already disproved. The supplementary character of his thirteenth chapter is apparent on the most cursory perusal.

It is alleged, further, that there is no part of the narrative, where the institution of the Lord's Supper can be introduced without violence. But this merely proves how far an infidel hypothesis may be carried, in defiance of all common sense. The twenty-first verse evidently is in verbal agreement with Matt. xxvi. 21; Mark xiv. 21, and in substantial harmony with Luke xxii. 21. The institution of the Lord's Supper appears to follow that warning in the two first gospels, but is placed earlier in St. Luke. Yet this Evangelist seems to furnish a key to the difference, when he says, of the cup, that it was given "after supper." Hence it is probable that the bread was distributed, where St. Luke places it, before that warning of treachery, and while Judas was present; but the cup at the close of the supper, after he was gone. The three gospels, however, bring the two parts of the ordinance together, St. Matthew and St. Mark de-

ferring one part, and St. Luke anticipating the place of the other, though careful to note its real time. The distribution of the bread may therefore be placed after verse 20, and that of the cup after verse 30, without any interference with St. John's narrative. It has been affirmed indeed, that verse 31, unquestionably has immediate reference to the retiring of Judas. But it is surely still more unquestionable that the words would continue equally appropriate, five, or ten, or twenty minutes after his departure, as at the moment when he left. The words do not relate to any special feature of that moment of time, but to the whole of our Lord's sufferings, now in immediate prospect. Hence nothing can be more futile and groundless than the attempt to exclude the celebration of the Lord's Supper, on the plea of an inseparable connexion between the successive verses of St. John's narrative. An interval and pause is equally possible, and even probable, from the form of the expression, after the twentieth verse. The bare supposition that the writer was ignorant of the rite, or of the well-known time of its appointment, is one of those extravagancies which refute themselves.

The motive for the comparative silence about this rite is very clear, on a little reflection. When St. John wrote, the institution itself, and the time of its occurrence, were matters of perfect notoriety. Besides the account in the three gospels, St. Paul had announced it to the Corinthians, as one main part of the gospel which he had proclaimed in all the churches. In xiii. 2, 4, St. John evidently alludes to this Paschal supper, as well known to his readers, and his whole account presupposes that the other circumstances, of the compact of Judas, the preparation of the guest-chamber, and the presence of the twelve apostles, were already notorious. He therefore confines his narrative, as was natural, to those incidents and discourses, which the other Evangelists had omitted to record.

Other objections have been raised against the narrative of St. Luke. And first, the contention for preeminence is said to be evidently misplaced, and due only to a contrast of ideas in the

mind of the writer. But the very reverse is plainly true. The words of the rebuke contain a direct allusion to the touching incident recorded by St. John, the washing of the disciples' feet, which was at the beginning of the meal, and we have thus a plain example of undisguised coincidence, and a pledge for the veracity of both narratives.

It is objected, further, that Luke xxii. 28—30, is incongruous with a scene, in which our Lord had just announced his betrayal, and in which the temptations were yet future. After such a remark, no amount either of ignorance and misconception with regard to the facts, or of blindness to the moral beauty of our Lord's sayings, can excite any surprise. The temptations, to which allusion is made, continued through the whole of the public ministry of Jesus, while the kingdom of heaven suffered violence, and the earnest-hearted took it by force. The promise has a double force and beauty, from the time when it was made, in the very midst of plain warnings of their partial apostasy, and of the weakness of their faith.

Again, it is alleged, by Schleiermacher, as well as Strauss, that the incident of the two swords is introduced as a mere fictitious prelude to the anecdote of Peter's hasty boldness in the verses that follow. The connexion between the two statements is clear, but their common truth is sealed by a delicate and indirect coincidence. The words of our Lord to Pilate, "then would my servants have fought," or "continued to fight," allude to the fact of Peter's attempt to defend his Master, and of the prohibition he received, while the miraculous cure explains the silence of our Lord's enemies with regard to this particular ground of accusation. The incident, indeed, contains the evidence of its own reality, in the misconception of the disciples, the deep significance of our Saviour's warning, and the mistaken effort of Peter, which followed so quickly after the words were uttered.

Another divergence is said to exist, in the mode by which the traitor was discovered. St. Matthew reports that Judas put the

question, "Is it I?" and received an affirmative answer; while St. John makes the revelation a secret imparted to himself and Peter only. It is further objected that the words, "He that dippeth with me in the dish, shall betray me," and the giving of the sop to Judas, are only two inconsistent reports of the same tradition.

One part of the difficulty is removed at once by the words of St. John. "He then, falling back upon the bosom of Jesus, saith to him, Lord, who is it?" He reclined backward, for the very purpose of inquiring privately. But the answer in St. Mark to the common inquiry of the disciples, is a more general designation—"One of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish." The Apostles, when they first heard the warning, might be in doubt whether it applied to one of themselves, or only to that wider circle of disciples, among whom they held the foremost place. Our Lord first limits the warning to the Twelve, and then privately, in reply to John, points out the individual traitor. There is thus a climax, and not an identity, in the two successive indications, while both allude to a special aggravation of the traitor's guilt.

But St. Matthew says that Judas himself put the question, "Is it I?" and received the answer, "Thou hast said." How, then, could it be true that no one at the table knew the meaning of those words—"What thou doest, do quickly," or what meaning can be attached to the private communication, mentioned by St. John? If we suppose St. Matthew to express the substantial meaning of our Lord's reply, rather than its precise words, the two accounts are easily reconciled. The question of Judas might concur with St. John's private inquiry, and the same action, which revealed the traitor to the beloved disciple, would be an affirmative reply to himself, equivalent to the words in the gospel—"Thou hast said."

Indeed, every part of this affecting narrative has the stamp of deep reality. The intense desire of Jesus, to partake the Pass-over before he suffered; the deep humility of the act which in-

troduced it ; this minute distinction in St. Luke, between the time when the bread and the cup was given ; the ambitious dispute renewed even at the last, and the reproof drawn from our Lord's own conduct, as related in another gospel only ; the verbal agreement in the first warning of treachery ; the harmony between the second statement, which confined it to the Twelve, and the private sign, by which the traitor was discovered to St. John ; the truth-like minuteness of detail, in the reclining of the Apostle on the Lord's bosom, that he might put the inquiry in secret ; the perplexity of the other disciples ; the agreement with the time of the supper, on the eve of the great feast-day, and with our Lord's precepts on almsgiving ; the confidence of St. Peter, and its infectious influence on the rest of the disciples ; the gracious promise given them, in the very hour of their coming desertion ; the mysterious warning of their future exposure to affliction, with their misconstruction of its meaning, and the false use of the sword in the garden, to which their error led—these are all so many concurrent signs of truth, and give an air of reality, not to be mistaken, to every part of the solemn narrative.

8. The events of Thursday night after the last supper, both in the garden, and before the high priest, have given rise to various objections, which call for a brief notice. The first relates to the vision of the angel, and the bloody sweat recorded by St. Luke. The peculiar nature of the incident, and its absence in the other gospels, have been held to be a sufficient proof that it is a mythical embellishment. How, otherwise, could St. Matthew and St. John pass it by without notice, or whence could St. Luke derive his information ?

Now here it is important to observe the language of the Evangelist himself, which serves to instruct us in the true source of the statement he has made. He does not profess that the angel was witnessed by the Apostles, but by Jesus only, "There was seen by him an angel from heaven, strengthening him." And hence it is plain that the writer does not profess to have

learned it through external testimony, since he adds further that the disciples were sleeping for sorrow. The statement, therefore, evidently professes to be the result of a higher or supernatural communication, made by Jesus himself after the resurrection. Is there, then, any key in the New Testament, to explain its origin? The answer is very simple. The third gospel was written by a companion of St. Paul, the one Apostle, who had no knowledge of Christ after the flesh, but received his commission later, and by supernatural revelation. The account of the last supper in this gospel is almost verbally the same, as St. Paul has given in the Epistle to the Corinthians, and which he says that he received directly from the Lord Jesus. It is therefore quite consistent, that St. Luke's account of the night of agony should embody particulars, derived from this great Apostle, and which he had received by direct revelation, because they were important for the instruction of the Church, and the knowledge of them could be gained in no other way. The presence of one or two brief incidents of this kind is thus an indirect confirmation of the traditional authorship of the gospel, as composed by the beloved St. Luke, the bosom friend of St. Paul; while the sparing introduction of them shews the severely historical, and thoroughly practical character, which the Spirit of God has wisely impressed on these fundamental records of the Christian revelation.

It is urged, next, that the account of the agony, which St. John has omitted, is inconsistent with the tone of the discourses he has given, and which, in their turn, are absent in the other gospels. Such a relapse from lofty confidence into deep dejection is said to be fatal to the ideal perfection of the Lord Jesus, or else to prove that one or other description is mythical and untrue. The further assertion, that St. John places the arrest immediately after the arrival in the garden, so as to exclude any interval, however brief, is manifestly untrue.

The contradiction, here charged upon the gospels, is nothing else than a deep and secret harmony, though not obvious to the

careless or prejudiced reader. For St. John records, in the opening of the discourse, the trouble which seized upon our Lord, while he warned his disciples of his own betrayal. In the middle of the same discourse, we find a prediction of the conflict and agony, referred to its spiritual cause. "Hereafter I will not talk much with you, for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." The spiritual conflict, through which he was about to pass, would lead him to observe a comparative silence. And after the discourse was ended, at the very time of his apprehension, his words, given in the fourth gospel only, are a plain allusion to the prayer, which the other gospels ascribe to him during his bitter agony. "Put up thy sword into its sheath; the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Thus it appears that our Lord, at the time those discourses were uttered, was looking forward to a speedy access of strong temptation, of the severest kind, before his deliverance; and hence the partial contrast between their tone, and the prayer in the hour of agony, with the subsequent allusion to that prayer, constitute one of the deepest and most beautiful harmonies of the word of God.

St. Luke, again, has been charged with a gross error, when he says that the chief priests were present at the apprehension of Jesus. The charge is groundless and very superficial. The term applies, in all the gospels, to a class including many individuals, the higher order of the Jewish priesthood, whether from family or public influence. When we observe how the hierarchy were all interested in the seizure of our Lord, which they thought essential to their own safety, it is most unlikely that so important a task would be entrusted to underlings alone, and the uncertain fidelity of the traitor, without the presence of some members of the Sanhedrim. Hence the statement of St. Luke is confirmed by its inherent probability, and there is no counter evidence whatever.

But the mode of apprehension has caused a serious difficulty. According to the three first gospels, its signal was the kiss of

Judas. But in the fourth gospel, the revelation is made by Jesus himself, while Judas stood with the band, and it was followed by a proof of our Lord's Divine power, when the whole company fell backward to the ground. How can these statements be reconciled with each other ?

This difficulty, like the rest, is apparent and not real. We may suppose that Judas went before the band, while they were at a short distance, to give the appointed sign, that on the rebuke of our Lord, he retired back to them again ; and at the same moment our Lord advanced to meet them, as they drew near, put the inquiry, whom they were seeking, and after the proof of his power, resigned himself into their hands. That his death was an act of voluntary surrender, and long foreseen, is stated as clearly in the other gospels, as by St. John himself, and is only a mark of their consistency with each other. The mention also, of the servant's name who was wounded, since he was a servant of the high priest, agrees with the notice, that the beloved disciple was known to the high priest ; and since it is elsewhere stated that this was the disciple who wrote the gospel, there is here another specimen of undesigned coincidence.

9. The narratives of Peter's denial require a distinct notice. Here the writers are said to be irreconcilably at variance. If their separate accounts are retained, there must have been from six to nine separate offences, which destroys the agreement between the fact and the reported prediction. Thus Paulus would specify eight different events ; the denial before the portress, before several at the fire, before a damsel at the fire, before one without name in St. Luke, before a damsel in the porch, before the relative of Malchus, before one who detects him by his speech, and before several others. It is made a further difficulty, that Peter was without at the last denial, and hence it was impossible that he should see Jesus, and that his look should occasion the repentance of the sinning disciple.

A little attention to the details will soon remove the chief difficulty. The two first of the three denials are distinguished

by the place where they occurred, the hall and its outer porch, and the third, by the interval of rather less than an hour, before its occurrence. But it is not at all necessary to suppose that one questioner alone was concerned in each denial. The first, according to St. John, was in reply to the damsel who kept the door, soon after the entrance of Peter into the hall of the high priest, and is referred to a damsel, though in more general terms, by the three other evangelists. The second denial, in the porch, is referred by St. Matthew to another maid, by St. Mark to the same with the first, and by St. Luke, to one of the by-standers. Three different parties might very well concur in the same inquiry. At the interval of nearly an hour St. Luke places the third denial, which he refers to one person, who confidently affirmed that he was a Galilean. St. Matthew and St. Mark assign the remark; more generally, to "them that stood by," who also detect him by his Galilean dialect. Their accounts, therefore, agree well with each other.

St. John, however, seems to vary from their report, in the second and third denials. For the second is referred to nameless parties, while Peter stood and warmed himself; and the third appears to be its continuation, not on the ground of his Galilean dialect, but of his actual presence in the garden. The party is also said to have been a kinsman of Malchus, whose ear Peter had cut off.

This difference seems to be explained by the observation, that St. John was within the hall, and does not appear to have left it, till the trial was at an end. Hence the second denial, as it is numbered by the others, did not occur in his presence, while the third, which took place just before the cock-crowing was itself two-fold. Several persons took part in it, according to the common statement of the two first gospels. The detection is there ascribed simply to the dialect of the Apostle, as a Galilean. St. John, however, notices a distinct assertion, by a kinsman of Malchus, that he had seen Peter in the garden, at the apprehension of Jesus. There seems, then, to be a latitude in the

enumeration of the three denials. St. John omits the second, which took place without, where he could not witness it, and distinguishes two separate incidents in the third denial, which took place in his own presence, just before the cock-crowing. This variation, while it illustrates the absence of artificial concert, confirms the historical accuracy of both the divergent narratives.

10. The death of Judas is another event, upon which plausible objections have been raised. St. Matthew and St. Luke agree in the statement that a field was purchased near Jerusalem with the price of his treachery, and called *Aceldama*, or the field of blood. But in the Book of Acts the purchase is ascribed to Judas himself, in St. Matthew to the Sanhedrim; and the death itself is referred in the gospel to suicide, by hanging; in the other statement, to the bursting asunder of his bowels, as if by a heaven-sent judgment.

The difference in the manner of the traitor's death has been removed by an easy supposition; that the branch from which he suspended himself having broken, he was precipitated headlong, as described by St. Peter, and so perished. But how does it happen, the objector replies, that each Apostle should record one half only of the events, and omit the other? The context supplies an easy explanation. The object of St. Matthew is to describe the remorse of Judas, and hence he dwells exclusively on his voluntary share in hastening his own wretched end. But the purpose of St. Peter is to record the fulfilment of a Divine judgment, which was more signally seen in the revolting issue of his half-finished suicide, and the visible appropriation, by the expiring traitor, of the field of blood. He took possession, as it were, of his fatal purchase in that very moment, when his body was precipitated upon the ground, and his bowels gushing out, his unhappy spirit passed away to its final account.

But this leads to the second difficulty, with regard to the author of the purchase. And this too, on close observation, reveals a positive, though secret harmony. For what is implied in St. Matthew's statement? Why did the chief priests, on

taking counsel, purchase that field, and for this special purpose, the burial of strangers? Clearly, because Judas, himself a stranger in Jerusalem, had died in that very field, and either was already, or presently after was to be buried therein. They combined an equitable design, of securing to him his own burying place, with an object of public utility, since deaths would be not infrequent during the resort of strangers to the annual feasts at Jerusalem.

Now the words of St. Peter acquire a peculiar emphasis on this view of the history. The purchase, by a bold, but impressive irony, is referred to Judas himself. It was he who provided the purchase-money, when he cast down the pieces in the temple; and it was he who pointed out its destined purpose, and took possession in his own person, when, falling headlong, he was precipitated upon the ground in that very field. The use to which the spot was then assigned, and the name which it popularly received, were a strict fulfilment of the burden—"Let his habitation be desolate." The only portion he gained by his covetousness was a desolate and ignominious burial-place, a proverb of reproach to all the dwellers in Jerusalem. The whole statement, on this view, agrees with that in the gospel, and adds to it the solemn irony of a righteous indignation, and a fuller reference to the uplifted hand of retributive justice, in the traitor's unhappy death.

11. The accounts of our Lord's trial contain many features, which establish their common truth, while the difficulties are only such as naturally arise, where different witnesses give a detailed narrative of a long series of events. Among the marks of truth may be noticed, the charge of blasphemy on which our Lord was condemned by the Sanhedrim, and the substitution of another, that of sedition, when he is brought before Pilate; the language of the false witnesses, compared with the words of Jesus, three years before, at the first cleansing of the temple; the repeated allusion to the custom of releasing one prisoner at the feast; the superstitious care of the Jewish priests, not to

defile themselves, by entering the Roman judgment-hall; the contemptuous tone of Pilate, when he disclaims being a Jew, and his wish to avoid the shame of becoming a tool of the priests, by executing a sentence, which he believes to be unjust; his fear to displease the Emperor, which makes him yield at the last; his desire to oblige Herod, by owning his jurisdiction over the Galileans, when compared with the offence he had given him by a contrary conduct, not long before, (Luke xiii. 1,) and the result, in their reconciliation; the curiosity of Herod himself, and its disappointment, and the scourging of Jesus, the usual antecedent of crucifixion. All these features bear the clearest impress of historical fidelity.

In the crucifixion itself, the chief difficulty which has been urged relates to the offering of vinegar. This is related with some variety, and it has been argued, as probable, that it arose from an attempt to meet the language of the prophecy, which is referred to by St. John as then fulfilled.

It is usually allowed by commentators that three distinct events are put on record, the offering of vinegar, or wine mingled with myrrh, before the crucifixion, the offering of vinegar by the soldiers in derision, during its course, and again, the actual tasting of it, just before our Lord expired. To this it is objected, that if every divergence is to constitute a distinct event, then the beverage in St. Matthew must be distinguished from that in St. Mark, from the opposite design, and that in St. John from both, because it follows a totally different exclamation. Such a plea, however, is utterly groundless. In the first place, there is no proof of a different purpose in the later offering, as recorded by St. Matthew and St. Mark. In each the purpose appears to be benevolent. There is no evidence that the mention of Elias was derisive, and not rather the language of expiring hope among those who had been impressed by the miracles of Jesus, and whose awe returned upon them with the miraculous darkness. The divergence, in St. John's account, is just as ill-suited to prove a distinct occurrence. The event, in all

three writers, immediately precedes the death of Jesus, and is therefore evidently the same. The only difference is that St. John records a single word of Jesus, uttered after the loud exclamation in St. Matthew, and before he received the vinegar. Now it is very probable that he was the only disciple within hearing when it was uttered, while the loud cry, just before, would be audible to many; and hence the added circumstance, while quite consistent with their statement, is a fresh pledge for the authenticity of the fourth gospel. Again, the fact that the two first gospels relate two events of the kind, is a clear sign that they drew from real facts, and did not invent, with a mere view to create a fulfilment of prophecy. With regard to the beverage first administered, it was evidently sour wine, drugged with bitter ingredients, and probably a stupefying draught. It is quite possible that gall might be mixed with it by the soldiers, in derision; and that St. Mark has been content to notice the general character of the draught, as containing bitter drugs; or else we must suppose that St. Matthew has used the word in a looser sense, which maintains the substance and spirit of the prophetic statement.

12. The last topic affecting the consistency of this part of the narrative, relates to the exact time of the trial and crucifixion. According to the three first gospels, the darkness which attended the crucifixion, lasted from the sixth to the ninth hour, and St. Mark further specifies the third hour, as the time when the crucifixion began. St. John, on the contrary, tells us that it was about the sixth hour, when Pilate sat down on the tribunal, to pass the final sentence. It seems a just remark, in the *Leben Jesu*, that attempts to reconcile the difference are fruitless, unless it can be shewn that the fourth gospel adopts a different reckoning of time from the others. But it is equally plain that if such a variation is proved to exist, and to reconcile completely the several accounts, it becomes a key-stone in the arch of that internal evidence, which establishes the veracity of the gospel narrative.

The proof of this variation, in the reckoning of the fourth gospel, is cumulative in its nature, but appears to be complete. First, in John i. 39, we read of two disciples—"They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: now it was about the tenth hour." But the same day Andrew found his brother Simon, and brought him to Jesus; and the other disciple, as the word *πρῶτος* implies, did the same with his own brother. This is less probable, if the interview were at four in the afternoon, but quite consistent, if it were ten in the morning.

Next, in John iv. 6, we read that "Jesus, being wearied with his journey, sat on the well: it was about the sixth hour." The woman of Samaria came, immediately after, to draw water. It is well known that the morning and evening were the two customary times for drawing water, as was natural in those hot climates. The same hour is also a likely close for a wearisome day's journey. Hence all the features agree with the hour of six in the evening, rather than with noon-day.

The cure of the nobleman's son at Capernaum took place at the seventh hour. If this were seven in the evening, it accounts fully for the parent's delaying his return till the next day. But if it were 1 P.M., there was time enough for the messengers to be sent to him at once, or for his own return.

The last instance occurs in this very account of the crucifixion. And here the context alone fixes the mode of reckoning. He tells us that it was *πρωι*, or the time between daybreak and sunrise, when the high-priests brought Jesus to Pilate. But when Pilate sat down on the judgment-seat, after the private discussion with the priests was ended, the writer continues—"It was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour, and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King." Then, after some further discussion, he delivered him to be crucified, and they led him away. The actual crucifixion is assigned by St. Mark to the third hour. And hence, if we suppose the public decision of Pilate to be soon after six A.M., the sentence of the two malefactors, the mockery of the soldiers, the preparations for the

crucifixion, and the slow procession, might well occupy an interval of two or three hours. Indeed, the first and second cock-crowing, the coming on of day, and the time of *πρωια*, or the season before sunrise, the sixth hour in the modern reckoning, the third, the sixth, and the ninth Jewish hours, when collated together, form a consistent record of the hourly events of this ever-memorable day, by which the reality of the four narratives obtains a most powerful, though indirect confirmation.

CHAPTER III.

THE HISTORY OF THE RESURRECTION.

THE leading events, in this part of the sacred history, are substantially the same in all the four gospels, or combine easily together. But there is still so much diversity, as to have given rise to multiplied objections, and to have exercised the diligence of many harmonists, whose explanations differ considerably from each other.

The general outline of the events is this. On Friday evening, when our Lord expired on the cross, Joseph of Arimathea went in to Pilate, and gained permission for the burial. He then took down the body from the cross, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a new tomb of his own, in a garden, near to the place of crucifixion. The women from Galilee, especially Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, beheld where he was laid. They returned, and prepared spices and ointments for the burial, resting, however, during the Sabbath day. Joseph, on departing had rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre. On Saturday the Sanhedrim applied to Pilate, and gained leave to guard the sepulchre, sealing the stone, and setting a watch around it. Early on the first day of the week, when it was morning twilight, the women set out to the sepulchre, whether in one or two companies. Meanwhile there was an earthquake, an angel rolled away the stone, and sat upon it, the guard were struck down to the earth with fear, and Jesus rose from the dead. The women, on arriving, received one or more messages,

from one or two angels, who appeared to them, that Jesus was risen, and would go before them into Galilee. Jesus himself appeared, first of all, to Mary Magdalene, while she was alone at the sepulchre, having returned to it again, and afterwards to others of the women. They report his appearance to the Apostles, who believe them not. The same day two disciples set out to Emmaus, and the Lord appears to them on their journey. During their return, he appears to Simon Peter; and after their return, while they are reporting what has happened in their journey, Jesus suddenly appears in the midst of them, and reproves their previous unbelief, while he confirms his own resurrection by shewing his hands and feet, and by eating before them. The Apostle Thomas was then absent; but, after a week's interval, when he is present with the rest of the Apostles, the Lord appears again, shews him his hands and side, and chides his unbelief. In obedience to their Lord's directions, the disciples repair to Galilee; and, while waiting the time of his more public appearance, he reveals himself to seven of them by the sea of Galilee. Soon after, he appears to five hundred disciples at once, on a mountain in Galilee which he had appointed for that purpose. Another vision, as we learn from St. Paul, was to St. James alone, and last of all a parting appearance to the Eleven at Jerusalem, when he had led them out to the mount of Olives and Bethany, and while he blessed them, was parted from them, and received up into heaven.

But while this general outline results from all the four narratives, there is far too much variety in their accounts, to leave any suspicion that they are copied from each other. On the contrary, the diversity is so great, as to have exposed them to the opposite charge, of being irreconcilable. Such is the line of argument which Dr. Strauss has adopted from a long line of assailants of the gospel. Instead of beginning with a formal harmony, it will be more convenient to examine the difficulties as they arise, and to point out the easy solution, by which they are converted into fresh proofs of historical reality.

1. The first objection is raised against the accounts of Joseph. First, he is called simply a rich man and a disciple, then by Mark and Luke, an honourable counsellor ; and lastly, by St. John, he is said to be a secret disciple, for fear of the Jews. Hence it is inferred that we have a personal description, developed into more and more preciseness, and that the accounts are legendary, not historical.

It is difficult to meet objections, so shadowy as these. The four accounts are perfectly consistent and definite. Had they occurred elsewhere, the critic would be accounted mad, rather than subtle, who should pretend to discover in these simple statements the marks of a legend. The signs of reality multiply upon us here, the more closely we compare the gospels. St. Luke alone, writing for Greek converts out of Palestine, supposes Arimathea to be unknown, and describes it as a city of the Jews. St. Matthew, writing probably for Galilean Christians, speaks of the place as known, but the person, unknown. Lastly, St. John assumes a knowledge both of the place and person, and merely adds an explanation, implied in the former gospel, that he was, like Nicodemus, a secret disciple. The description in Mark and Luke, that he was a counsellor, or member of the Sanhedrim, would be suitable for the Latin and Greek converts, but almost superfluous in St. Matthew, writing directly for Jews at an early date, or in St. John, whose gospel was many years later than the rest.

2. A more serious objection relates to the part of Nicodemus in the burial. It is urged, first, that he is named only in the fourth gospel, and hence his very existence doubtful, since the church was careful to record every other who took part in the obsequies of our Lord. Next, that his embalming of the body, with so copious a store of spices, is inconsistent with the facts related of the women, who must have known of it, had it really occurred. Thirdly, that the varieties are legendary, being clearly progressive. St. Matthew makes the anointing at Bethany a substitute for the due rites of sepulture. The second and third

gospels add the circumstance of an intended embalmment, which is not really performed. The fourth proceeds further, and makes mention of an actual embalmment; but still, "after the manner of legendary formations," leaves the original anointing to co-exist with the rites of interment.

Here, first of all, nothing is plainer than the historical consistency of St. John's statement. There is no room for the expedient of a legend: the account is either an historical truth, or a flagrant and wicked falsehood. But besides the character of the whole gospel, which refutes the monstrous calumny, the passage alone disproves it. "There came also Nicodemus (who before came to Jesus by night) bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds' weight." Such a brief allusion, and equally brief statement, bears the stamp of truth on its face. When we look below the surface of the narrative, we meet with further evidence of reality. How, it may be asked, came Nicodemus to be so forward in his faith and love to Jesus, at such a moment, when his most favoured disciples were in deep perplexity and sorrow? He seems to have had only one interview with our Lord, and this occurred three years before. But a seed was then sown, which might well bear fruit at the present moment. For our Lord had, even then, predicted the very manner of his death. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up." And hence the fact of the Crucifixion would explain to Nicodemus what had probably exercised his thoughts for months and years, and complete in him the conviction, which it shook in others, that Jesus of Nazareth was a true prophet, and the very Messiah of God.

The idea of fictitious development, in the anointing of our Lord's body, is utterly groundless. For the fourth gospel records alike the anointing of Mary, before the burial, and the actual embalming by Joseph and Nicodemus. The two middle gospels are more explicit than St. Matthew and St. John as to the preparation of spices by the women, but it is naturally implied

in every narrative. It could not be merely to see the tomb, that Mary Magdalene visited the sepulchre, but clearly with a view to some offices of love to the lifeless remains. A mere visit was lawful on the Sabbath, since the sepulchre was nigh the city. Nay, the very words, in Mark xiv. 8. imply that the sister of Lazarus had only anticipated that office of love, which others would be ready to complete in its due season.

The only real difficulty is to explain, why the women prepared spices and ointments, when the body had been already embalmed. The simple answer seems to be, that they were not aware of the circumstance. It is objected that they were present, and saw, not merely the place, but the manner in which he was interred, Luke xxiii. 55. The criticism has plainly no warrant in the words of the gospel, which refer entirely to the position of the body within the tomb. The women had no license from Pilate, but only Joseph, with whom, as a counsellor, and only a secret disciple, they could have had no previous intercourse. The same remark applies to Nicodemus. There was no room, then, for concert between the two parties. It is implied, in all the three gospels, that the women saw the body laid in the linen robe, when taken from the cross, and its actual deposition in the tomb. But it is not likely that the intermediate process of binding in the *othonia*, with the spices, would be equally public. The arrival of Nicodemus, with the spices, would seem to have been unexpected by Joseph, who had brought only the fine linen for the burial. And since no communication could take place with the two counsellors, the women, whether this part of the ceremony was done in secret, or whether they supposed it to be done imperfectly, from the evident signs of haste which attended it, would naturally prepare spices and ointments against the first day.

3. Here a third difficulty arises, on which frequent stress has been laid. St. Mark tells us that "when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Salome, bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him." St. Luke, however, says that the women from Galilee,

after they beheld the burial, "returned and prepared spices and ointments, and rested the Sabbath-day, according to the commandment, but on the first day of the week came early to the sepulchre." Hence the preparation of the spices seems referred, by the writer, to Friday afternoon, before sunset; but by the other, to Saturday evening, when the Sabbath was past.

It is clear, from St. Mark, that the two Maries and Salome prepared their ointments after the close of the Sabbath, and the received version cannot be sustained. It is not so clear that St. Luke fixes the preparation to an earlier date, since the mention of the Sabbath-rest may be an historical parenthesis. But it is a simpler solution of the difference, that the two Maries and Salome are specified by St. Mark, while St. Luke may refer to the other women, who had followed from Galilee. After the burial, the two Maries continued watching opposite the sepulchre, and hence they might be too late to obtain spices before the Sabbath began. The others, including Joanna, might retire earlier to the city, and thus prepare spices and ointment, before the sunset on Friday evening. This explanation, which may be confirmed by the following narrative, illustrates the minute accuracy of the sacred history, which is found consistent even in details that appear to be at variance.

4. The place of the burial has been thought to present another difficulty. According to St. Matthew, the body was placed in Joseph's own tomb. But in St. John a different reason is assigned for the choice. "There laid they Jesus, therefore, on account of the Jews' preparation-day, because the sepulchre was nigh at hand." The vicinity, it is thought, when alleged as a motive, excludes the fact of possession. A house in which a person takes shelter, simply because it is near, is evidently not his own.

This objection can have no force, unless it were self-evident that the same tomb must have been chosen, because it belonged to Joseph, apart from the near approach of the Sabbath, and its convenience in a hurried burial. But this is not true, for several

reasons. And first, St. John, who alone assigns the special reason for the choice, alone associates Nicodemus with Joseph, and ascribes to him the more costly share of the preparations. Hence the site may be mentioned to explain why the tomb of Joseph was preferred to one of Nicodemus, who probably had a more honourable place in the Jewish council ; while a tomb more distant from the scene of public disgrace might appear to them both more worthy of the Messiah of God. Or again, it is quite possible that Joseph might have intended to bury our Lord in some sepulchre, not appropriated, rather than in one designed to receive his own remains, and that only the convenience of the site prevailed over his original purpose. Or finally, it might be the remembrance how near his own tomb was to the place of crucifixion, which emboldened him to apply to Pilate, and court a privilege, dangerous in itself, and less appropriate, it might seem, to a merely concealed disciple. But the nearness of the sepulchre would enable him to perform the due rites, without awakening needless jealousy, or the risk of opposition, either from the Pharisees, or the attendants and disciples of Jesus. On any of these views, the two statements will be fully reconciled.

5. The whole history of the watch, in St. Matthew, has been violently assailed, as an incredible fiction. It is urged, that the Sanhedrim could not remember any such saying of Jesus, about his resurrection, since he never spoke of it plainly before his enemies, while they could not understand figures too dark even for the disciples, and the predictions, even before these disciples, are unhistorical ; that no appeal is ever made to the fact afterwards, and no trace of it found, except in the first gospel ; that the women could not have failed to be aware of it, had it really occurred ; that the soldiers would not have been so easily led to a confession, very dangerous under the Roman discipline ; and, finally, that the Sanhedrim would hardly, in full conclave, have bribed the soldiers to a direct lie, and least of all, have credited their assertion, and thus actually admit the truth of the resurrection of Jesus.

All these difficulties, insisted on with so much confidence, disappear like shadows upon a close and exact inquiry. And first, the gospels do record an express prediction of the very kind, which might awaken the suspicion of the priests. It was in a public discourse, and in answer to a question of the Scribes and Pharisees, that Jesus uttered the words—"As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." With all truth, therefore, might the Pharisees say to Pilate—"We remember that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again." The impression, derived from the more direct prediction, would probably be deepened by the charge of the false witnesses, which it would require no great penetration to interpret as a garbled account of a similar declaration.

The ignorance of the women is no difficulty whatever. For the permission was only gained on the Sabbath, and the guard would be placed at sunset, or rather later, when the Sabbath was over. The excitement of the crucifixion would then, with the great body of the people, have died away, and the women, intending to visit the sepulchre early, would have no motive for intruding on it in darkness. The night which belonged to the third day was the season, when they feared a collusive attempt of the disciples, and hence there would be no object in setting the watch till the sun was down, and the Sabbath already past.

The silence about the watch, in the Book of Acts, and in the other gospels, is of no weight to disprove its occurrence. For this gospel bears the marks, throughout, of being written in Palestine, for Jews; and hence the insertion here is more natural, and a more direct pledge of its reality, than in all the others, of which two were clearly written beyond the limits of Palestine. There is no passage in Acts, where the mention of it would be natural, since the direct evidence of all the Apostles, attested by many miracles, that they had eaten and drunk with him after he arose, was far more conclusive and striking, than

the mere perplexity of the guards, when the body had disappeared, they knew not how.

But the soldiers, it is thought, would not have been so easily bribed to accuse themselves of a dangerous breach of discipline. The answer is very simple. The report was intended for the ears of the Jewish commonalty, from whom the soldiers had nothing to fear. That Pilate should hear of it was a remote contingency; and, besides the good offices of the chief priests, of which the bribes alone were a full assurance, they would always have it in their power to clear themselves, by disclosing the bribery of the council, and recanting their own confession, as a mere tale to amuse the people. Had they been bribed to make a confession of similar neglect, while in the governor's own service, the objection would then have some validity, but at present it is quite groundless.

Lastly, the conduct of the Sanhedrim, which has been thought incredible, is very natural, and easily explained. It is ridiculous to suppose that the writer imputed to them a real faith in the resurrection, when that was clearly the grand question at issue between the Christians and the unbelievers. The whole difficulty rests on the secret assumption, which is palpably false, that there could be no middle state of mind, between the admission that Jesus was risen, and the conviction that the guards had all slept, and then invented a story to hide their own negligence. But this is entirely to overlook the clearest statements of the gospels. The Sanhedrim were persuaded that Jesus had wrought many miracles, and still held him to be a deceiver, who had wrought them by magic, or by some compact with the powers of evil. Hence the report of a fresh wonder, a stupor and amazement of the guards, an earthquake, and a seeming angelic vision, would by no means appear incredible. They might regard it as another unfortunate coincidence, or magical display, very likely to revive the delusion of the commonalty, and thus to work mischief to the state. Obstinate in their own unbelief, in spite of earlier miracles, or of these unexpected wonders, their sole aim is to

prevent any mischievous influence on the ignorant common people. Hence the story, which they put into the mouth of the soldiers, would not be, in their view, a direct falsehood: it would be the exact truth, with a mere omission of unaccountable circumstances, which might disturb the unbelief of others, though not their own. The soldiers, by their own account, had sunk together in a sudden stupor, and during this interval, the Sanhedrim inferred, since the body was plainly missing, the disciples must have contrived to steal it away. We have thus an early specimen, in these chief priests, of a rationalistic interpretation; and both the *suppressio veri*, and *suggestio falsi*, find many parallels among our philosophical critics in modern times.

6. The Visits of the Women are the next main subject, on which the narratives appear to diverge. St. Luke, it is said, speaks of many women, not only three whom he names, but certain others; Mark has only three, and Salome instead of Joanna; Matthew simply the two Maries, and John, the Magdalene alone. The time in St. Mark, at the rising of the sun, contradicts the other descriptions, that it was yet dark, and very early in the morning. St. Matthew seems to assert that the women saw the stone rolled away by the angel; the other gospels, that it was done already, before they came in sight of the sepulchre. In St. Luke they are accosted by two angels, in St. Matthew and St. Mark by one only; in St. Matthew, without, in St. Mark, within the sepulchre. In St. John, Mary Magdalene returns, without having seen any such appearance. In Mark, the women are silent, through fear; in St. John, Mary reports only the removal of the body, to two disciples; in St. Luke the report is made to all the eleven; and in St. Matthew, it includes a vision of Jesus. In St. Luke, Peter visits the sepulchre alone; in the fourth gospel, attended by John; in one case after, in the other before, any report of the angels having appeared. These are some of the main contradictions, which have been thought to discredit the sacred narratives.

Several of these difficulties are easily removed, on a close comparison of the gospels. And first, the discordance in the time of the visit is apparent, not real. For St. Mark himself places it, *λιαν πρωι*, or very early in the morning, a phrase quite equivalent to those in St. Luke (*ορθρου βαθεις*) and St. John (*σποτιας στι ουης*), and inconsistent with the idea, that the sun had actually arisen. Doubtless the rendering "when the sun was about to rise," is grammatically untenable, but it is equally clear that the sun is used, not for the disc, but the light, and that the phrase might be rendered "when the daylight had broke." The very same usage appears, Judges ix. 33; Psalm civ. 22. And hence all the accounts fix the visit to the hour before the real sun-rise, when the darkness was not quite ceased, but the dawning of the day had already begun, or in one word, to the interval of morning twilight.

The contrast, with regard to Mary Magdalene, is not less easy to explain. That others were with her is clear, even in St. John, from her words to the Apostles: "We know not where they have laid him." She evidently left her companions, as soon as she saw the stone was removed; and therefore her report to Peter and John was earlier than that of the other women, made to all the Apostles.

A more doubtful question remains, whether the visit in Matthew and Mark, and the one in Luke, are the same or distinct; and if distinct, whether in close succession, or with the visit of Peter and John interposed between them. The first view is that of most early writers, revived by Dr. Robinson; the last is adopted by West, in his Treatise on the Resurrection, and by Dr. Townson, in his Dissertations. The intermediate view, preferred by Mr. Greswell, may be established, I think, by decisive arguments. The chief points to be confirmed, on this hypothesis, are the consistency of the accounts in St. Matthew and St. Mark, the distinctness of the visit in St. Luke, the sameness of the visit of Peter, in St. Luke and St. John, the explanation of the appearance of the women, in St. Matthew,

compared with that to the Magdalene alone ; and finally, the practical consistency of the whole series in point of time.

7. The harmony of the accounts in St. Matthew and St. Mark is easily shewn. The parties are the same, except that Mark alone specifies the presence of Salome, who is never introduced by name in the first gospel. The precision of the second gospel is very striking. First, the two Maries alone are said to have watched, on Friday evening, how the body was laid. Next, the two Maries, with Salome, bring spices when the Sabbath is past, and come early the next morning to the sepulchre. Lastly, our Lord appears, first of all, to Mary Magdalene alone. There is here the minute accuracy of a well-informed and careful historian.

The contrast, as to the angelic vision, is apparent only. St. Matthew does not affirm that the women witnessed the descent of the angel, or the rolling away of the stone, but only that it took place about the time when they were on their way to the sepulchre. According to St. Mark, they perceived first, at some distance, that the stone was removed, and only after they entered in, saw the angel. This account is confirmed both by the first and the fourth gospels. For St. John tells us that Mary Magdalene returned, to inform Peter and John, as soon as she saw the stone was taken away ; and plainly at that time no angel had appeared. Again, St. Matthew tells us that, when the angel had done speaking, the women departed quickly out of the sepulchre, a clear proof that the vision must have occurred within. It has been objected, indeed, that there is interposed the invitation of the angel, to come in with him into the grave, and see the place where the Lord had lain. But this gloss is inconsistent with the force of the words, and with the whole keeping of the vision. The phrase is not "come along with me," as if the angel would lead them the way into the tomb, but "come ye hither," which implies that he was already at the spot where the body had lain. This agrees punctually with the statement of St. Mark, that the angel was seen on the right side as they

entered the tomb, and said to the women—"Behold the place where they laid him."

8. The distinctness of the visit in St. Luke, on which the charge of contradiction has chiefly been made to rest, may be shewn by several concurrent reasons. And first, the whole number of women must have been six at least, and might probably amount to twice the number. For the two Maries, Salome and Joanna, are expressly named, and certain others with them. Also St. Mark informs us that there were many others, besides the Maries and Salome, who had come up with Jesus from Galilee. But St. Luke mentions, besides all the women from Galilee, certain others, residents probably at Jerusalem. Hence the total number must have been from eight to twelve or upwards. But St. Matthew mentions two only, and St. Mark only adds Salome, at the visit they record; while the successive mention of the two Maries and Salome, and of Mary Magdalene alone, seems to prove that the list is not partial, but complete. Hence the rest of the women, not fewer than five, and perhaps twice as many, must have come separately to the tomb.

Again, the Maries and Salome, according to St. Mark, prepared their spices after the Sabbath was past, but the women in St. Luke, unless we strain the passage, before it was begun. This is another sign that they were a distinct company.

The events at the tomb confirm this difference. The Maries and Salome inquire, as they draw near, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the sepulchre? for it was very great." No such perplexity is intimated in St. Luke; and if Joseph rolled the stone to the door, the larger company, of not less than five, and perhaps of ten women, might certainly roll it away, without seeking aid from others. When the Maries and Salome enter the sepulchre, they see at once "a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment, and they were affrighted." The other party enter in, and are perplexed by the absence of the body, before any vision appears, and then "two men stood by them in shining garments." It might be possible, with some

harshness, to explain the term, not as descriptive of a standing posture, but of a sudden appearance; but the other features of contrast remain, the interval of perplexity, the two angels, instead of one, and the total diversity of the message. The tone, in one case, is that of encouragement, in the other, of gentle and serious rebuke. In one case, there is a direct message given, to the Apostles; in the other, an admonition to the women themselves.

Again, the two accounts, when viewed as supplementary, have a remarkable harmony amid their partial contrast. The angel appeared to the Maries and Salome at the instant when they entered the sepulchre, to give them the appointed message to the Apostles. And hence their first impression was one of overpowering fear and surprize. He invites them to a closer view of the place where the body had lain; but their fear overmasters them, they flee at once from the sepulchre in amazement, and it is after some interval that they recover from their consternation. The second company, being more numerous, would be less liable to the influence of terror. But the angels, aware of the alarm, which the appearance of one of them had caused to Mary and Salome, remain concealed; until these others have had full time to examine the sepulchre, and the very place where the body lay, the napkin and the linen clothes, and to infer from these facts the resurrection of Jesus, which he had so often foretold. It is only when their survey is complete, and perplexity, instead of faith, is the result, that two angels appear to them, and chide their unbelief. No direct message is given to the Apostles, since one had been sent already. The whole aim of the address is to confirm the faith of the women in the fact of the resurrection, by an appeal to the words of Jesus in Galilee. Though fearful at first, the main effect of the discourse is not to increase their terror, but to refresh their memory; and there is no sign of consternation, but rather of calm thoughtfulness, in the description of their return from the sepulchre. It is plain that two women would be more likely to feel alarm and terror, than a much larger number, who composed the second company.

A similar contrast appears in the result of each visit. The company of Joanna, according to St. Luke, return at once to the eleven, and bring tidings of the vision. But St. Mark reports of Mary and Salome, "They fled from the sepulchre, for they trembled and were amazed, and they said nothing to any one, for they were afraid." How long this silence lasted, we are not told; but it seems clearly implied that they did not return at once, like the others, to impart their message.

Two objections alone have to be removed, which stand in the way of this explanation. The first relates to the time of the visit in St. Luke, which is "very early in the morning." Hence it seems impossible that it could have occurred much later than the one in St. Matthew and St. Mark; and, the time being the same, the visits themselves could hardly be different. This objection seems decisive against the view of West and Townson, who interpose the return of Mary, the visit of Peter and John, and the appearance of Jesus to the Magdalene, before the later visit of the women. On this view the description of the time, in St. Luke, would seem altogether inaccurate, and the sun must have actually risen, and open day have begun, before their arrival. But the objection has no force against the present arrangement. Five minutes would suffice for the visit of Mary and Salome, after the Magdalene had left them, and an interval of a quarter of an hour would be amply sufficient, to put asunder the two visits from each other. Hence both alike might occur, *λίαν πρωί*, or *ορθρου βαθεως*, early in the morning, before full daylight had begun.

The other objection rests on the words of Luke xxiv. 10. "It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the Apostles." This seems, at first sight, to imply that all these women formed one company, and made their report together.

A closer observation of the whole passage will set aside this inference, and establish a different view. The Evangelist has completed his account of the visit, without mentioning a single

name ; and the verse in question is a recapitulation, to introduce the statement of the disciples' unbelief, and of the visit of Peter to the tomb. It is certain, again, from St. John, that Mary Magdalene made a separate report to Peter and John, earlier than the rest, and before the angels had appeared. Hence two reports at least are grouped together in one general statement. But why should Joanna be mentioned between the two Marias, since she does not appear in St. Matthew and St. Mark, and they certainly visited the tomb together? The simplest explanation is that these are named, because each of them, alone or with others, made a distinct report to the disciples. The first was by Mary Magdalene alone. The second would have been by Mary, the mother of James, and Salome, if they had returned at once to the Apostles. St. Mark, however, intimates some delay, before their message was given ; and thus Joanna and her companions might make their report, before Mary and Salome had recovered from their alarm, and fulfilled the angel's direct commission.

The difficulty involved in the double visit, without mutual interference, is not hard to remove. If we admit, what is highly probable, that there were two routes from the sepulchre to different parts of the city, the whole narrative is quite consistent. Mary and Salome might flee from the sepulchre in the same direction in which Mary Magdalene had gone, and by which Peter and John returned, while the rest of the women, about a quarter of an hour later, might come and return by a distinct route, that led from the heart of the city. In the absence of fuller information, we cannot tell whether half an hour, or an hour would elapse, before the two Apostles arrived. Either interval, however, would be enough for the second party to have left the sepulchre, and to be on their way to the city again.

9. The visit of Peter has next to be considered. In the arrangement of West and Townson, which several others have adopted, and even in Macknight, who admits only one visit of the women, the accounts in St. Luke and St. John are held to

be distinct and successive. Yet the resemblance, even in the phrases, is so close, as to lead naturally to an opposite view. Thus Peter "ran unto the sepulchre," and Peter and the other disciple "ran both together." Peter stooped down and saw the linen clothes lying; in the other gospel the very same words are used of John. Peter "saw the linen clothes lying by themselves;" and again, "he saw the linen clothes lying, and the napkin that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself." Peter "departed to his home," and the two disciples "departed to their homes." The identity in the phrases is almost complete. It is a further reason for this view, that St. Luke would not be likely to omit a first, and record a second visit of Peter, when the object was to shew the partial effect produced by the messages of the women, and when the second visit led to no fresh discovery, beyond the first. Further, the words of Cleopas, verse 24, imply clearly that more than one disciple took part in the visit, mentioned by St. Luke just before.

The main objection to this view is thus stated by Dr. Townson. "There is good reason to believe that the Evangelists have disposed what each of them writes on the subject of the resurrection in exact order of time. But this is an exception, if St. Luke and St. John describe the same visit of Peter to the sepulchre, since Peter and John went together before any report of a vision of angels, and this is related after such a report."

This ground for distinguishing two visits has clearly no weight. For, in the view of the same author, St. Luke has grouped together in one three distinct, successive reports, in the previous verse. And hence, if the visit of Peter followed alike the visit of Joanna, and the report of Mary Magdalene, it is mentioned in the very place, where it involves least deviation from the strict order of time. Greater accuracy could only be gained by recasting the whole narrative, and recounting separately each visit of the women, and each partial report that was made to the Apostles. In short, St. Luke, after summing up the tidings of the women, states the

general fact of the unbelief of the disciples. He notes, however, one partial exception; that Peter was sufficiently stirred by what he heard, to run and visit the sepulchre, without attaining a full belief of the resurrection. He leaves it to be stated more explicitly by St. John, that he attended Peter in this visit, and that it took place upon the first report of Mary Magdalene, and not after the fuller tidings of the other women.

10. Another difficulty arises from the appearance of Jesus to the women, recorded by St. Matthew. If he appeared just before to Mary Magdalene alone, how came she to have a second vision so soon after? Or again, if he appeared to them so quickly after their visit, while on their way to the disciples, how could his appearance to the Magdalene be the first.

It cannot be denied that this passage presents greater difficulty than any other in the four histories of the resurrection. The fact, that Dr. Robinson places the vision before the appearance to Mary, which St. Mark emphatically styles the first, and that Mr. Greswell delays it seven days after the resurrection, proves clearly the embarrassment which it has caused. One of these views does violence to the evident force of St. Mark's statement, and the other, to the whole context in St. Matthew. Let us consider the account more narrowly.

First, it seems quite clear that the appearance to Mary Magdalene was the earliest. This results naturally from the words of St. Mark: "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils." It is an evident straining of the words, to make them comparative, with reference merely to the three appearances that next follow. They stand between an appearance of angels only, and three appearances of Jesus, and form the emphatic link of transition between them. Again, since Mary has just before been named with two others, it must be as much in contrast to them, as to the other disciples, that this priority is asserted. And hence the view of Dr. Robinson is certainly untenable. It is unnatural on another account, because Mary

Magdalene takes precedence of the others in each gospel, where their common visit is named ; and the eminence of her love is evidently crowned by this privilege, of witnessing her Lord's first appearance.

But the opposite extreme, which delays the vision in St. Matthew until seven days later, is still more unnatural. The message would have lost its meaning and emphasis, when our Lord had repeatedly appeared to the Apostles in His own person. And besides, we have the express statement, that while they were carrying this message, the watch went into the city, and reported to the priests what was done. Hence the vision must have been early on the morning of Easter day, or the account will have to be rejected altogether as a spurious addition.

A comparison of the gospels seems to fix, almost exactly, the time of this appearance. It was later than the first appearance to Mary Magdalene alone, mentioned by St. Mark, and detailed by St. John. Hence it must be probable, that like the message of the angel, it was given to the other Mary and Salome, and to them alone. It was not much earlier than the journey to Emmaus, or else Cleopas, the husband of Mary, would have known of it before his departure. It was still so early, that the report of the watch to the chief-priests was made about the same time. Hence it seems probable that Mary and Salome were delayed by their terror, in imparting the angel's message. After some delay, they might perhaps report it first to Peter and John, after their return from the sepulchre. They might then set out to find Mary Magdalene, who had parted from them, and who, as they would learn from those Apostles, had returned from the sepulchre ; and the vision might be given to them not far from the tomb, and very soon after Mary had left it, to carry the tidings to the rest of the disciples.

It is urged, however, by Dr. Townson, that St. Matthew and St. John both imply the presence of Mary Magdalene at the time of this second appearance. The words of St. John, however, rather imply the reverse. Instead of any hint, that she paused

on her way, and rejoined her companions, he speaks of her, as if she returned at once, and without delay, to report the vision to the Apostles. "Mary Magdalene cometh, reporting to the disciples, that she hath seen the Lord, and that he hath spoken these things to her." Again, her presence is implied in St. Matthew, only in the same manner as it is implied during the message of the angels. But since it is clear from the second gospel that Salome was of the party, and from the fourth, that Mary Magdalene was absent, when the two others entered the sepulchre, and saw the angel, it is clearly the most natural to suppose that the same women were present at the time of each message, that is, the wife of Cleopas and Salome, but not the Magdalene. It is most unlikely that she would be favoured by two visions in quick succession.

11. We are now able to trace the connexion of the events, and their mutual consistency. About an hour, probably before sunrise, or when it was still dark, though day had begun to dawn, Mary Magdalene, the other Mary, and Salome, in one party, and Joanna with more numerous companions, set out, either at a slight interval, or from a less and greater distance, to visit the sepulchre, intending to meet there before sunrise, and complete the burial. At this time there is an earthquake, an angel descends and rolls away the stone, and the guards around the tomb fall, as if lifeless, with astonishment and terror. The angel does not remain visible from without, but retires within the sepulchre. As they approach, the two Maries and Salome see the stone rolled away, and Mary Magdalene runs back in haste, to tell Peter and John of this unexpected occurrence. Meanwhile Mary and Salome enter the tomb, and the angel appears to them at once on the right side, where the body had lain. He seeks to remove their fear, tells them that Jesus is risen, invites them to view the place more closely, and bids them tell the Apostles and Peter, that he would go before them into Galilee, and reveal himself there, as he had promised. But their fear overpowers them, and they flee hastily from the sepulchre, and

are some time before they recover from their amazement, so as to seek out Peter or the other Apostles. Very soon after, Joanna and her party arrive, find the stone rolled away, and enter the sepulchre, when they find to their surprise that the body is gone. After some delay, that their search may be complete before any alarm confuses their minds, *two* angels appear to them, perhaps because these are a more numerous company, chide their unbelief, and remind them of the repeated predictions of Jesus, that he would rise from the dead. With feelings of solemnity and joy, rather than terror, these women retire from the sepulchre, and report the tidings to the eleven Apostles, who were in their usual place of assembly, since the day was now begun. Soon after, Peter and John run to the sepulchre, followed by Mary. The angels do not appear to them, but leave them to examine calmly the condition of the tomb, and reason upon it for themselves. Mary remains behind, weeping. On looking down into the sepulchre, the same angels appear to her, as to the previous company ; and on turning round, Jesus speaks to her with words of comfort, being His first appearance after the resurrection. While she conveys her message to the Eleven, her two companions are favoured with a like vision, which they also report to the disciples. Before these latest tidings, sometime in the forenoon, Cleopas and his companion set out for Emmaus. Jesus meets with them on the way, and after making himself known, vanishes away suddenly, probably about the ninth hour. They return at once to Jerusalem. During their absence, the Lord appears to Simon Peter. On their return, they find the Eleven gathered together, and conviction beginning to force itself on their minds. Yet still, when Jesus appears in the midst of them, they are terrified, and relapse into unbelief, supposing it to be a spirit, until Jesus himself chides their incredulity, and reassures them by fresh proofs of his resurrection.

On this arrangement the sequence, which is prominent in each gospel, is maintained. The appearances of the angels all precede those of our Lord himself ; and those of our Lord to the women

precede those to the men ; while Mary Magdalene brings the first report, and receives the first message. John is the first of the Apostles who believes in the resurrection, and Peter the first of them who receives a direct vision of the Lord.

12. One or two objections still remain to be considered. And first, the running to and fro of the disciples, the appearance, disappearance, and reappearance of the angels, is thought to be fantastic and unnatural. But the only running to and fro, on this arrangement of the events, is that of Mary, Peter, and John, and is highly true to nature in every part ; while the hurried flight of Mary and Salome is equally truth-like, and has all the marks of reality. The appearance and disappearance of the angels has to be weighed by its moral purpose, since a power of becoming visible at pleasure is involved in the very nature of such a vision. Now in this point of view, every particular is natural and appropriate. When two women enter the tomb at first, one angel alone appears, and gives them an encouraging message. When their terror hinders their obedience to his invitation, and endangers the clearness of their evidence to the facts, the heavenly visitants, for more than one was present, remain invisible, on the arrival of the second company, until their search and their perplexity are complete. Then, and not before, two angels appear, in a different posture, a double vision because of the larger company, so as to dispel every idea of illusion, and render the evidence of reality complete. When the Apostles arrive, the angels are invisible again, because it was important to give free scope for the use of their reason on the fact reported by Mary, and on the condition of the grave-clothes within the tomb. In the case of St. John, the evidence suffices, and "he saw and believed." The slower, but more reasoning and manly faith of the Apostles, was to be formed without any help of direct angelic visions. To Mary again, in her deep love and sorrow, both angels appear, and thus prepare her, by a kind of transition, for the vision of their Lord, which presently follows.

There is thus a moral unity and appropriateness in every part, which deepens the sense of historical reality.

Another difficulty has been raised against every attempt to combine the separate narratives. How comes it, the objector asks, that of the many visits and appearances, not one writer mentions all, and scarcely one the same as his neighbour, but each has chosen a different part for representation? The solution, by the hypothesis of different informants, is then examined, and affirmed to be untenable.

Now first, a general supply may be found in the natural sequence of the events themselves. The proofs of the resurrection were threefold, in evident gradation, appearances of angels to the women, appearances of Jesus to the women, and appearances of Jesus to the male disciples. Each gospel exhibits this essential progress, except that of St. Luke, where the silence about the appearance of Jesus to the women is balanced by the fuller record of the journey to Emmaus, and the preparatory vision of the two disciples, with the parenthetical mention of the vision to Peter also. The leading succession being thus maintained, variety of selection in the details is only a proof of independent information in each writer.

But on closer inquiry, the motives of selection become apparent, and merge in the general features of each gospel. St. Matthew, writing nearer to the events, when the question was mainly one of oral testimony, makes his whole account centre on the appearance in Galilee, which Jesus had solemnly appointed, and at which, as we learn from St. Paul, five hundred disciples were present. Of all the appearances, this was the most decisive and notorious. Hence that visit of the women, and that appearance of Jesus on Easter-day, are alone selected, where a reference is made to this future manifestation. Intent on this main object, the Evangelist overlooks minor details, the presence of Salome, the return of Mary Magdalene, and the vision which she separately received. The meeting in Galilee is the one object of the whole narrative.

St. Mark, as usual, fills up and expands, and in a certain sense, corrects, the account of St. Matthew, without varying from his selection. Yet, mindful of the purpose of his gospel as a supplement, instead of following out the history of his predecessor, he gives a brief list of three successive appearances of Jesus, which all occurred on Easter-day. He mentions the presence of Salome, omitted by St. Matthew. He explains their approach to the sepulchre, of which we might easily have had a false impression, from the brevity of St. Matthew, and shews that they entered the tomb, before the angel appeared to them. He notes the distinct mention of Peter in the angel's message. He affirms a delay in the report of the women, from their terror, which serves to remove a difficulty in other parts of the narrative. Lastly, he mentions briefly the three appearances, which are given at greater length in the two later gospels.

The choice in St. Luke is equally explicable. He records that visit, in which Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward, had a leading part. This agrees with the many signs, which indicate his special acquaintance with Herod's household. Among the converts at Antioch, her testimony would probably rank the highest, since Manaen, a foster brother of Herod, was one of the teachers of the church, and no other of the women was likely to rank so high in worldly station. Besides, this company was the most numerous, the vision it received in the tomb was doubly impressive, its report the earliest given to the Apostles of any supernatural appearance, and allusion is evidently made to it in the following discourse of Cleopas. The visit of Peter is recorded, as a partial exception to the general statement, that the Apostles gave no credit to the tidings of the women. The chief distinction of the gospel, however, is the full account of the journey to Emmaus, which unfolds the brief mention of it in the supplementary verses of the second gospel, while the third appearance is equally expanded in the verses that follow. Lastly, St. John fills up the outline by a most graphic supplement, containing these particulars—the first rise of faith in his own

heart, the earliest vision to Mary Magdalene, and the last reproof of unbelief, in the case of the Apostle Thomas, with the charge of Christ to Peter and himself, by the sea of Galilee. The first part is an expansion of the brief statement in Luke xxiv. 12, the second, of the earliest appearance in St. Mark, xvi. 9—11; the third, alike of St. Mark and St. Luke, by a second appearance to the Eleven, when Thomas was present, on the octave of the Resurrection; while the last is just as clearly a supplement to the brief record, in St. Matthew, of the main appearance in Galilee.

13. But further objections have been brought against the whole series of manifestations, from the morning of the Resurrection to the day of Ascension. Many of these arise from the mere perversity of criticism, resolved to find or invent difficulties at all hazards. The order, resulting from a comparison of the gospels, and of St. Paul's statement, is very clear and simple. First, on the day of resurrection were the successive appearances to Mary, to the two other women, to the two disciples, to Peter, and to the eleven, when Thomas was absent. Next, on the following Lord's day, was a further appearance to the Apostles, when Thomas was present. Next, after their return to Galilee, was an appearance to seven of the disciples by the sea of Tiberias. Then followed the most public appearance, to five hundred disciples at once, of which the place, and perhaps the time, were appointed before leaving Jerusalem. Next followed an appearance to James alone, and lastly, one to all the Apostles in Jerusalem, on the very day of the Ascension. It seems probable that there might be others, but these are placed distinctly on record.

14. The first charge is brought against St. Matthew. His mention of the appearance in Galilee is said to be inconsistent with the statements in the other gospels. No one would appoint a distant interview by a third party, when he was intending to hold one in the same place, and on the very same day.

The main fact, however, which it is sought to involve in doubt, is established by a concurrence of witnesses. St. Mark, as well

as St. Matthew, reports the same message; while the actual journey of the disciples into Galilee, is fully attested by St. John, whose last chapter records a manifestation of Jesus by the sea of Tiberias. St. Paul, again, records an appearance to more than five hundred brethren at once, and so large a number of disciples were to be found only in Galilee. And hence, instead of isolation, there is here an almost unanimous consent of the sacred writers.

But why should St. Matthew three times refer to this vision in Galilee, and record no other, if he were aware of two or three previous appearances in Jerusalem? A double answer may be given. This vision was by far the most conspicuous and important, from the number of disciples who were present; and it was also the time of that direct commission, to preach the gospel in all nations, on which the Apostles were about to act, when the narrative was written. If a selection of one appearance were made, this was the most suitable to be placed early on record. And besides, since the gospel omits entirely the ministry in Judea, except during the last visit at the Passover, it is part of the same unity of design, which leads the writer to mention the public appearance in Galilee alone. Thus the continued fulfilment of the prediction, placed at the very opening of our Saviour's ministry, is rendered more striking and conspicuous.

Still it may be asked, Why should the angels, or our Lord himself, observe this silence about appearances, that were to occur much sooner in Jerusalem? It may be answered, first, that the double message was in the nature of a sign, since the women were not present when our Lord made the prediction, and were not likely to have heard it from the Apostles. The message itself was the proof of some Divine messenger. And if a reason be required for the prediction itself, probably a key may be found in the carnal hopes of the disciples. They had looked for the immediate setting up of a theocratic kingdom, of which the metropolis would be Jerusalem. When their hopes were revived by the resurrection, it would be natural for their thoughts

to revert into their old channel. But this message of our Lord, which still recognized Galilee as the main scene of his ministry, would be a clear sign to them that the Galilean character of the kingdom was still to continue, and that, even after the resurrection, they were called to a testimony involving reproach and disgrace, and not to the assumption of theocratic rule and worldly honours. There is thus a moral reason, of the deepest kind, for the stress laid on the appearance in Galilee, while it was also distinguished above the rest, because the place and time were previously appointed, and a share in it was granted to all the disciples.

15. The account in St. Mark has next to be examined. It is said to be incoherent, and hastily compiled out of heterogeneous elements, which the writer, having no clear idea of the facts and succession of events, knew not how to manage, and hence to be guilty of exaggeration in its statements of the disciples' obstinate unbelief.

The true secret of this censure is the fatal opposition of this narrative to the sceptical theory, which asserts an irreconcilable contrast between Matthew, and the third and fourth gospels. For it is plain that St. Mark, in the first part of his account, adheres closely to St. Matthew, while in the rest he gives a brief summary of three successive appearances at Jerusalem, which are detailed at greater length by St. Luke and St. John. Hence his alleged incoherency is nothing more than his thorough destruction of those castles in the air, which a sceptical criticism rears ingeniously out of its own false surmises, without any real foundation. In the view of the writer, early appearances in Jerusalem are clearly consistent with the message, that Jesus would meet his disciples in Galilee, and the whole contradiction between St. Matthew and the later gospels falls to the ground.

But this peculiarity in St. Mark, when thoughtfully examined, becomes a new proof of the historical reality of the whole narrative, and of the genuineness of the first gospel. As far as

xvi. 8, his account is like a simple paraphrase, or careful revision, of the freer and more dramatic statement of St. Matthew. Here he suddenly pauses, and instead of the appearance of Jesus to the women, and the repeated message, the episode of the watch, and the return of the disciples into Galilee, he recounts three visions of Jesus, that very day, in or near Jerusalem. He thus implies that the first gospel contained here a special selection of events, with a special purpose; and that it was needful to diverge from it, in order to resume, however briefly, the character of simple and continuous history.

Now if St. Matthew wrote in Palestine only twelve or fourteen years after the resurrection, this feature of his gospel is soon explained. There could be no need, at that early period, when four hundred witnesses of the resurrection were still alive, to give a full and continuous history, in order of time, of all the appearances of the risen Saviour. A selection, with direct reference to the objections current among the Jews, or the present duties of the church, would alone be natural and appropriate. It was important to exhibit the resurrection, in contrast with the calumny of Jewish unbelief, and with its strongest and most conclusive evidence, in its connexion with foregoing prophecy, and with the future development of the Church of Christ.

All these characters meet and are harmonized in the brief record of St. Matthew. He alone exposes the true source of the fable, that the disciples had stolen away the body of Jesus, and shews how the malice of the priests had turned to the fuller proof of the resurrection. He selects for notice that one appearance, which had been witnessed by five hundred disciples, and of which four hundred witnesses must have been still alive. He evinces the fulfilment of the prophecy of Christ, in the time of the resurrection, confirmed even by the voice of the Sanhedrim; and of another, in the place of his public appearance, first uttered in private, but afterwards supernaturally revealed to the women by the angel, as a pledge for the reality of the vision.

He thereby illustrates the continued fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah, from the opening to the very close of the ministry of Jesus, that the special scene of the great light, which the Messiah was to bring to his people, would be by the way of the sea of Tiberias, in Galilee of the Gentiles. On the borders of that sea, where the disciples were called to his side, the main public manifestation of the risen Saviour took place, on a mountain in Galilee. Finally, the same selection explained and justified the new course, on which the Apostles were just entered, or were now entering; and proved that, in separating from each other, and preaching throughout the Gentile world, they were only fulfilling a solemn commission which their Lord had given them. But the perfection of the narrative for this special purpose, left it most unfit for a complete record of the appearances of Jesus; and hence St. Mark, when the peculiar motive for selection was past, prefers to mention three of the earliest visions in the order of their occurrence.

But St. Mark is further charged with exaggeration, and a direct contradiction to St. Luke, in his statement of the unbelief of the Eleven, upon our Lord's third appearance. For in St. Luke, Cleopas and his companion are greeted at once with the words, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon." This contrast, indeed, has led Maldonatus, Dr. Townson, and others, to refer this passage in St. Mark to the appearance a week later, when Thomas was so directly reproofed. But the difficulty is not at all lessened by this supposition, since the reproof in St. Mark is addressed to the Apostles and disciples in general, and not merely to one out of the whole number.

The contrast, when examined, is apparent only. The words of our Lord, even in St. Luke, imply a direct censure of unbelief. "Why are ye troubled, and why do reasonings arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and feet, that it is I myself: handle me and see." We cannot suppose, however, that the third gospel contains all the particulars of this interview. The rebuke of their actual doubts and terror would be naturally

attended with a censure on their previous unbelief. And, in fact, the words addressed to the two disciples before, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe," render such a further rebuke to the whole company of disciples highly probable, from this gospel alone.

But how can this agree with the greeting in the third gospel—"The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon?" Simply, by a reference to the various characters of the disciples, and the various degrees, even of real faith. St. John had believed on the first view of the sepulchre; St. Thomas, not until the fourth vision, on the octave of Easter-day. One or two disciples might use the words in St. Luke, though even their faith was shaken by the suddenness of our Lord's appearance soon after; while others might continue to question whether Peter and the two disciples had not been deceived. The peculiar circumstances, that occurred on the way to Emmaus, were likely to renew questionings in those of weaker faith, and of a more sceptical disposition. And hence the two accounts are only contrasted views of the same facts, thoroughly consistent with each other, and confirmed by the very circumstance of their outward diversity. The distinct mention of Peter in the angel's message in this gospel alone, is another proof of reality; and agrees with the mention, by St. Luke alone, of a distinct vision granted to him before the other Apostles.

There are no objections, against the narrative in the two later gospels, that deserve further notice. It will be enough, in closing the subject, to point out some proofs of reality, that result from a comparison of the four narratives.

And first, St. Matthew alone furnishes no full key to the remarkable fact, that he has singled out for notice one interview in Galilee, since he mentions only the presence of the eleven disciples. But St. Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, removes the whole difficulty, where he states that more than five hundred brethren were then witnesses of the appearance of Jesus, and the greater part of them still alive. The reason why

this one interview should be selected for record in the earliest gospel, becomes hereby palpable and conspicuous to every thoughtful mind.

The exclusive mention, again, of this meeting in Galilee, might seem at variance with St. Luke's narrative, who alludes to no appearance, except in or near Jerusalem. But St. Mark's gospel, as it is intermediate in its date, supplies the wanting links of union. It equally affirms the reality of the message to the disciples, that they were to return to Galilee, and the fact of repeated appearances, soon after the resurrection, in and near Jerusalem.

From the account in St. Luke, we might have supposed that Peter was the only disciple who visited the tomb in consequence of the report of the women. But this leaves the words of Cleopas unexplained, who uses the plural number. "They found it even so as the women had said, but him they saw not." The fourth gospel reconciles the two statements, since it tells us that John accompanied Peter in this visit, and gives more precisely its occasion, and the time when it occurred.

St. Paul, in his brief list, affirms that our Lord "was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve." No trace of this first appearance is found in three of the gospels. But in St. Luke we are told that, when the two disciples returned from Emmaus, "they found the eleven gathered together, saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon." It is observable that the very words which appear, on a careless view, to contradict the second gospel, are precisely those in which we find this clear evidence of historical reality.

These are some of the most striking correspondences, of an indirect nature, which we find in the details of the narratives. But beyond all these, there is a tone of simple reality in every part, which carries its own witness to every honest and ingenuous reader. The humbling description of the disciples' persevering unbelief; the slow and gradual manner in which it gave way before evidence, constantly growing in clearness; the wise gradation

in the evidence itself, first, in angelic visions, of one, and of two angels, to two women, and to many ; the appearance of our Lord to the women, then to one and to two disciples ; then to the ten, and again, to the eleven Apostles, and lastly, to five hundred brethren at once ; the ardent zeal of Peter, both at the visit to the sepulchre, and at the sea of Tiberias, and St. John's greater readiness of spiritual discernment ; the mention of Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward, by the one Evangelist, who wrote for the church where Herod's foster-brother was a leading minister ; the graphic power of the discourse on the way to Emmaus ; the wonder and perplexity of the disciples, and the flash of joy when they suddenly recognize their Lord ; the correspondence between the three denials of Peter, and the separate message he receives, the searching inquiry thrice made, and the charge, as often given him, to feed the sheep of Christ ; the touching interview with Mary Magdalene ; and the parting invitation to the Apostle, to fulfil his own promise, and follow his Lord, even to prison and death ; all these are a moral evidence of reality, which scarcely admits of increase, and will leave those self-condemned, who refuse the full testimony which God himself has given, in these lively oracles, to the glorious truth of our Lord's resurrection.

BOOK IV.

ON THE IDEALITY OF THE GOSPELS.

THE four gospels have been examined, hitherto, as merely human narratives ; and their mutual consistency, and the internal signs of their authenticity have been deduced from a close observation of their agreements and differences, by the ordinary rules of historical evidence. The result has been to shew their close connexion and distinct authority, their successive origin, the early date of those which were first written, and their consistency and truthfulness, as genuine records of the life of Jesus.

This alone, however, would be a very imperfect view of their real character. They have claims of a higher and nobler nature. They are a message of truths the most deeply momentous, on which the welfare of the immortal soul depends. They are a Divine revelation to sinful men from the God of heaven. To estimate them aright, we must examine how far these writings justify a claim so lofty, and satisfy the reasonable tests of a Divine revelation. For when God speaks to men, He must speak to them as men ; that is, as creatures endowed with reason, who still retain some power of discerning between good and evil ; between religious imposture in its various forms of guilt and folly, and the wisdom, holiness, and love, which befit a real message from heaven.

But here the greatest caution is needed on either side. If we neglect the duty, which Scripture itself enjoins, to judge of our own selves what is right, and to try the spirits whether they are

of God, we abandon the reins of our conscience, and may become the victims of any delusion, that falsely claims a Divine origin. On the other hand, a corrupt and sinful heart will be prone to set up erroneous tests of Divine truth, and to make the messages of God plead, like suspected culprits, at the bar of a perverse and darkened understanding. All that reason can claim, at the outset, before it submits to a revelation as Divine, is a prevailing impression of holiness and moral beauty, and historical proofs of a supernatural origin. The gospels satisfy these tests, and thus have a solid claim on the acceptance and submission of every child of man. Where the evidence of their truth is honestly received, there will be a growing insight into the moral grandeur of the Christian revelation, and a deepening experience of its transforming efficacy, and of its power to comfort and ennoble the human heart. But those who wait for noon-day light, before they will walk in the pathway of obedience, already made plain to their view by the dimmer light of a newly awakened conscience, may be left to stumble on the dark mountains; and will never attain that clear and peaceful vision of heavenly truth, which is given, in due season, to the humble believer in the Son of God.

The gospels, then, since they claim to be a revelation from God, ought to fulfil the tests of such a revelation. But they may claim, in return, to be tried by these tests alone, and not by their agreement, in all things, with the proper characters of a common history. A message from God must have several features, which cannot be found in a merely human record. It must include the credentials of its origin, in its works of Divine power, or words of Divine foreknowledge, which would be absurd or incredible in the ordinary narratives of human historians. It will contain mysteries, since the nature of God is unsearchable; and difficulties, for a mystery, not explained, must be difficult and perplexing. It will vary from the impressions of natural conscience; for revelation would be needless, if the unenlightened conscience of man were a perfect and infallible guide. It will

be simple, that it may be suited for general use. But still it is probable that we shall find in it obscure statements, half hidden meanings, and darkly revealed glimpses of lofty truths ; so that the full comprehension of it may prove beyond the reach of the wisest men, and leave them, after years of meditation, oppressed with the sense of their own ignorance, in listening to these messages of God, as in the presence of surpassing and infinite wisdom.

Such is the character of the four gospels. It is this union of opposite characters, extreme simplicity, and surprising depth and fulness, which has made them the stumbling-block of learned infidels, as well as the unfailing treasury of comfort, peace, and wisdom, to every humble and pious mind. Their assailants, from the necessity of the case, have been divided into two rival sects. Some of them, perceiving how inseparably the human element in the gospels is linked with all the history of that age, have striven to free it from those supernatural features, in the miracles of Christ and His apostles, in His resurrection and ascension, and the gifts of the Spirit, which form the glory of the New Testament. Their perverse diligence gave birth to a series of strained expositions, the most senseless that ever ventured into the light of day. The angel, who announced the birth of Christ to the shepherds, was expounded into a flash of lightning, a messenger bearing a torch, or a Jewish youth ; and the angelic hymn, into the notes of a Jewish pleasure party, coming from Bethlehem. The walking on the sea was either swimming in the sea, or walking along the shore. The miracle of the loaves was merely an example set by the disciples to those who had an excess of provision, of giving to those who had none, so that all fed out of a previously hoarded store. These are a few specimens of the attempts made by the older rationalists to retain the human reality of the gospels, and still to reject that supernatural element, which is their life and glory.

In the reaction from such monstrous criticisms the mythical theory had its birth. There were many whose unbelief was too

deep and strong, to permit their return to the old paths of Christian faith and obedience, but whose common sense recoiled from such learned follies. They could not shut their eyes to the fact, that a supernatural element does pervade the gospels, and cannot be separated from the narrative, unless by criticism at once dishonest and absurd. To get rid of a Divine revelation, it was needful, at all hazards, to get rid of the entire history. The gospels were therefore proclaimed, as a great discovery of improved critical science, to be early Christian legends. It was some relief, when men were resolved to reject the Christian revelation, to replace the countless follies of the rationalists by one simple, but gigantic falsehood, which allowed the laws of language their free course, and once more accepted the Christian meaning of the records, but denied altogether their historical reality. The facts most deeply engraven in the hearts of millions, most fruitful in public results, and sealed by the whole course of later history, were thus gravely pronounced to be the inventions of ardent fancy, and either cunningly devised fables, or a series of unreal and cloudy dreams.

Such a thesis required no little skill, to make it appear less absurd than the older theory, on which it claimed to be so great an improvement. The objections of earlier infidels to the consistency of the gospels, were therefore brought diligently together, with an air of seeming candour, and calm philosophical inquiry; and yet with due care to make the scales weigh, in every case, on the negative side of uncertainty or contradiction, and thus to prepare for the final expedient of resolving the whole into a dream of fancy. But the main argument, without which it was foreseen that these objections would fall to pieces of themselves, or perhaps recoil in overwhelming evidence of truth and sincerity, was the assumption, made at the outset, that a supernatural revelation is impossible. From such a premise it was easy to draw the inference, when other objections failed against any narrative in the gospels, that it clearly partook of a supernatural character, and was therefore incredible and untrue.

The greater part, then, of the reasoning on which the mythical theory has been made to rest, is simply a *reductio ad absurdum* for infidels themselves. It proves clearly to the unbeliever, that consistency requires him to deny, root and branch, all the facts in the New Testament ; and that the existence and the death of Jesus of Nazareth, are almost the only remnants of truth that can be safely allowed in the whole history, without incurring imminent danger that this goodly temple of unbelieving philosophy, like that of Dagon, may fall suddenly to the ground, and bury the adversaries of the truth under its ruin. The history of Christ and the Church, for sixty years, must be upheaved from the ground, where it has struck ten thousand roots, and interlaced itself with all other history, and be transferred wholesale into the land of shadows, before the learned infidel can find himself at ease in his rejection of the authority of Divine revelation.

In this last book it is my purpose to consider these more abstract objections to the gospel history, which relate to its supernatural character, and to shew that they furnish in reality, new and striking proofs that we have here authentic messages from the God of heaven. With this object in view, it will be needful to consider, first, the miracles, and then the prophecies, in the four gospels ; their harmony with the lessons of conscience, or their moral beauty ; and the marks of spiritual unity in each separate gospel, by which they form collectively a consistent and harmonious, but varied revelation, of the true character and Divine glory of Christ our Lord.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE MIRACULOUS CHARACTER OF THE GOSPEL HISTORY.

THE Gospel of Christ, since it claims to be a revelation from God, must be expected to contain the credentials of its own origin, or tokens of supernatural power, and Divine wisdom, confirmed by reasonable and sufficient evidence. The sacred writers repeatedly offer this simple explanation of the miracles they record, that they were the suitable and adequate tests of a Divine message. It was God himself, who thus bore witness to the word of salvation, "by signs and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will." What might be incredible, then, in a common history, is not only credible, but essentially requisite, in the sacred narrative, if it is to satisfy the natural tests of a revelation from heaven.

Modern philosophy, however, professes to have discovered a principle, which supersedes all further inquiry, and at once disposes of the whole question between the infidel and the Christian. Miracles, it is said, are impossible in their very nature, and every narrative where they appear is certainly untrue. The conviction has now been attained, that all things are linked together by a chain of causes and effects, which suffers no interruption; and the belief in any immediate intervention of God may therefore be referred at once to ignorance or imposture. To suppose that God, in most cases, acts mediately, through the law of consecutive causes, but sometimes immediately, is said to be

a double error, which breaks the chain of nature, against all experience, and also introduces a changeable element into the action of God. The only consistent view is that the Divine agency is always both immediate and mediate, and therefore neither ; or more clearly, that he acts immediately on the whole, but on each part, mediately, or only by means of his action on all the rest.

Such is the foundation of the new creed, which is to displace historical Christianity. It is in truth, the predicted creed of the scornors in the last times, clothed in the garb of a learned phrasology. "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." But whatever the drapery it may assume, it is as superficial as false, and will not endure the test of a moment's thoughtful examination.

And first, the statement, as propounded above, is a logical contradiction of the plainest kind. For clearly, if a whole is acted upon immediately, then either every part, or some part, is acted upon immediately also, and the first proposition excludes the second. Again, if each part is acted on, only in a mediate manner, then the whole is excluded from being the object of immediate action, and there must be something, apart from God, and from the whole creation, which is the medium of the Divine agency on that creation ; another evident contradiction. The main pillar, on which the whole building of philosophical infidelity is raised, yields to the first touch of serious inquiry, and crumbles into rottenness and dust.

Let us attempt to gain a clearer view of the subject, which this pretended philosophy only wraps in absurdity and contradiction. Two extreme theories are possible, and have sometimes been held, with regard to the mode of the Divine agency. The first of these recognises, in God, the Sole Cause of all things, and hence reduces every action, of every creature, into a varied, but direct action, of God himself. This may be called the mystical theory of the universe, and seems almost inseparable from direct

Pantheism. The other supposes that God has established certain laws and powers at the creation, in virtue of which the whole system continues to move on, like a clock that has been wound up, without any further call for Divine interference. This view reduces the universe to one vast machine, and God himself to a mere mechanician, the perfection of whose work would be impaired, if there were any need for his continued operation.

These two extremes are alike unsatisfactory and erroneous. The first annuls the idea of creation, and makes God the sole agent, and by consequence, the only being. The second destroys the ideas of Providence and moral government, and banishes the Almighty from the universe He has made. Only at an equal distance from these errors is it possible to attain a just view of this mysterious and lofty theme, the operation of the Most High. Let us see whether a simple course of reasoning will not clear away the doubt and obscurity, and present to us the outline of a more consistent theory.

Creation, then, and our own consciousness, alike prove, that there is a real power, derived from God, of which the creature is participant, and a limited sphere of agency, resulting from the power thus bestowed. Our thoughts are not the same as the thoughts of God, our actions not the same as the actions of God ; though all our power of thought and action is a gift, originally derived from His creative energy. On the other hand, to suppose this derived power, when once given, entirely independent, so as to need no sustentation, is a view which shocks all our instincts of reverence towards the great Preserver of men, and does violence to all just conceptions of the Divine supremacy. But this sustentation, is the sustentation of a power already imparted, and not a direct and immediate agency ; or else we should be involved once more in the error just exposed, and creation would be reduced, as in Buddhism, to an unreal and deceptive dream. Hence we may infer that the action of God upon the universe is both immediate and mediate ; not in the contradictory sense already disproved, as if the action on the whole

could be of one kind, and on every part, of a kind entirely different; but that the whole, and every part, is immediately sustained and upheld by the Divine Providence, in the faculties and powers originally bestowed; while every action, and consequently every passion, is from God, through the medium of these powers, laws, and properties which He himself has created, instituted, or bestowed, when His powerful word called the universe into being.

Now here the question must arise—Does the double work, of immediate sustentation of all existing powers, and of mediate action, in all the various results of the powers thus upheld, exhaust the conceivable modes of Divine agency? Is every other mode of Divine action a contradiction in terms, and therefore impossible and incredible? Have the gifts exhausted the fulness of the Giver, so that nothing more is in His power to bestow; or do the laws He has instituted fetter the Supreme Lawgiver, so that all action beyond their limits is interdicted, even to God himself for ever? The answer must surely be self-evident. He who sustains the powers of nature, must be able to vary them at His pleasure. And since all these powers, though real, are only gifts derived from the Creator, they cannot have exhausted the Divine energy; but He must ever be free to act, as at the first, with no restraint beyond the secret lessons of His own infinite wisdom. Such agency, above and beyond the existing powers of nature, implies no variableness in the Divine Being. The same philosopher who admits that the power of God, under various and innumerable forms,

Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;

may admit, with as little impeachment of the Divine unity, that the same power, thus varied in its usual operations, works sometimes by a direct and immediate agency, resembling the direct volition of the human will. We must otherwise accept the impious notion, that the Almighty, in the act of creation, disinherited Himself of all power. The universe, on this view,

like the kingdom in Shakespeare's tragedy, will have been parcelled out among the children of the Most High, the creatures of His bounty ; most of whom repay the gift with ingratitude, and insult the weakness of a God, rendered powerless, by His own abdication, in the government of His own world.

The possibility, then, of miracles is a demonstrable truth. No second cause can be absolute and unchangeable, but must depend, for its origin and continuance, on the will of God. Creation, with its actual laws, cannot have exhausted the power of His Infinite Being. Nay, even in the higher spheres of creation, we witness a spontaneity, which serves to image forth, however dimly, the Divine freedom. And hence to restrict the agency of God to the simple maintenance of natural laws and mental processes, is to degrade Him below the level, which His more exalted creatures, by His own bounty, have been enabled to attain.

Since miracles are thus possible in their own nature, what are the limits which reason would assign for their probable occurrence? The constancy of natural laws is the only ground of prudent foresight, and is thus essential to the full development of human intelligence, and to a system of moral probation among the creatures of God. Yet since the very aim and purpose of such a system is to raise the creature into holy and delighted fellowship with the Almighty and All-wise Creator, whenever the constancy of those laws obscures from the minds of men His presence and dominion, and leads them to substitute a blind fate for a Moral Lawgiver, His wisdom seems to require that some remedy should be found for this great evil. Now this can only be some direct and immediate exhibition of Divine power, beyond the ordinary limits of natural causes, so as to force upon the mind the recognition of a superior Will. Whether this be done by a direct act of power, irrespective of all existing laws of nature ; or by the impartation, to a creature, of a new power, thenceforth to be exercised, but never bestowed before ; or lastly, by a combina-

tion of existing powers, beyond the reach of human foresight, in which the moral purpose is as plain, as the natural agencies are obscure and unknown, in all these cases the same result will be practically attained. The first is a true miracle, the second a miraculous gift, which afterwards ceases to be miraculous by its continuance; and the last is an extraordinary Providence, not always easy to distinguish, with our imperfect knowledge, from a strictly supernatural event, and which fulfils the same design, of reawakening the dull conscience to a sense of the power and dominion of the living God.

The occurrence, then, of miracles, is just as probable as the occurrence of a Divine revelation. And this, again, is just as probable as the two facts, that man is sinful and ignorant, needing the gift of spiritual light; and that God is gracious and wise, as well as holy, and willing to supply the deepest wants of the creatures He has made. Hence the attempt to discredit and discard the Bible, on the simple ground that it contains miracles, is one of the greatest of all conceivable follies. Reason, starting from the simple premises, that mankind are evidently sunk in great moral ignorance, and that God, the All-perfect, must delight in mercy, may infer safely that, some time or other, a revelation from God must have been given; and consequently that miracles must have occurred, under this very character, as the tests, and pledges, and reasonable proofs of a true revelation. When we find them recorded in this connexion, there is no improbability whatever to surmount. The inquiry must reduce itself to two points, whether the testimony be full and decisive, and such as we look for in any record of high practical importance, not miraculous; and next, whether the message, professing to be from God, commends itself, in its broader and substantial features, to the conscience and the heart. If this double test be satisfied, the submission of faith is the only course consistent with enlightened reason, or that will stand the final inquiry before the bar of the Supreme Governor of the universe.

Now the gospels clearly satisfy this double requirement of

sound reason. That their main substance, as a moral message, commends itself to the conscience, is plain from the admissions of modern infidelity, which boasts of retaining the inner essence of the gospel, and its pure morality, while it would sweep away the miraculous history as an antiquated legend. That the evidence, apart from the supposed improbability of miracles, is sufficient, nay, overwhelming in their favour, is clear from the laborious efforts of the natural interpreters, who have felt it easier to resort to the wildest absurdities of criticism, than to abandon the truth of all those portions, which do not involve the supernatural element. It is equally clear from the notorious fact, that events in the same age, far less amply verified, and by witnesses far less severely tested, are received as undoubted truths by every one, who is conversant with ancient history. And hence it is clear that unbelief rests upon one ground alone, a rooted aversion to the thought of God's immediate interference in the government of His own world, and to the binding authority of the truths He has thus revealed to mankind.

But a closer review of the miracles, recorded in the gospels, will discover in them internal marks of reality, and of the Divine origin of the message to which they belong. They are not only exhibitions of supernatural power, but also of the wisdom and goodness of the Almighty.

The first object of a true revelation must be, to restore to men that consciousness of the dominion of God, of His holiness and goodness, which has been obscured from them by their own pride and sensual corruption. Now the great hindrance which obscures from us the Divine dominion, is the unbroken constancy of natural laws; while the dark shadow which veils the Divine goodness, is the equal constancy and universal dominion of death. And hence, that a revelation may fulfil its main purpose, it should exhibit some suspension, by Divine power, of the laws of nature, and some victory of Divine goodness over mortality and corruption. How deep and rooted the evil to be overcome, the slavish prostration of the human will before a blind fatality,

hurrying them hopelessly to the tomb, is clear from the reasonings of our infidel philosophers themselves. They tell us that "the proposition, a dead man has returned to life, is composed of two such contradictory elements, that in the attempt to maintain the one, the other threatens to disappear. If he has really returned to life, it is natural to conclude that he was not wholly dead; if he was really dead, it is difficult to believe that he has really become living." And thus that unbelief, alike in the Divine power and the Divine goodness, which it must be the great purpose of revelation to remove, is found to centre in one gloomy doctrine, the omnipotence of death.

Now the Christian revelation, by its foremost miracle, the resurrection of Jesus, directly meets this grand evil, and satisfies in the highest degree the moral conditions of a message from God. For indeed a revelation would be a mockery, and unworthy of credit, which left men at liberty to continue perfect Sadducees, worshippers of the powers of nature, and believers in no supremacy but of death and the grave. The resurrection of our Lord, the cardinal fact of the gospels, reveals to us a Divine power, supreme above all physical law, and triumphant over the grand evil, which has enslaved mankind with the terror of its approach, and desolated the world from the beginning of time. The medicine is precisely suited to the nature of the disease to be overcome; for Jesus, by rising from the grave, has destroyed the power of death, and 'delivered those who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage.'

The nature, then, of the main gospel miracle, is eminently worthy of the Divine wisdom. That would have been a sorry revelation, which left our learned Sadducees at full liberty to receive it, and still to remain blind worshippers of fate and death, as they were before. Nothing else could so powerfully have broken the charm, in which men lay spell-bound, ignorant of the living God, their heavenly Father, and setting up in his stead for their worship a hideous spectre, whose shadow brooded over their hearts from the cradle to the grave. But it is not less

worthy of the holiness of God, than illustrative of his wisdom. It teaches us plainly that death is no fatal necessity of our being, but simply the wages of disobedience, and that the way is now open before us, by penitence and faith, to a final and lasting victory. The sole example, in the world's history, of a sinless perfection, has thus become the sole example of triumph over the grave. Tested by the ordinary course of human experience, the fact is indeed a miracle of the highest kind. But when viewed in another light, it loses its miraculous character, and links itself with a universal law of Divine government, twofold in form, and ceaseless in operation; but which, in its brighter aspect, has never besides been able to manifest itself here below; that supreme law which declares that the wages of sin is death, and that the commandment of God is life everlasting. It is a singular, solitary point, in the history of our fallen world; but flows from the same law, which is receiving a continuous and infinite development in myriads of immortal and sinless spirits, who surround the throne of God in heaven.

Let us now turn from this crowning miracle, to the cluster of Divine wonders, which attended the public ministry of our Lord. The same principle still appears conspicuous. The miracles, which he is declared in the gospels to have wrought, are not casual, arbitrary, and lawless; but while they transcend the physical laws of nature, conform to a higher and nobler law of Divine wisdom and goodness. Their leading character is one of mercy and compassion. They are the handmaids of a message of love, to which they minister, and in which they lose themselves, as streams in the ocean. "Go and tell John again the things ye do hear and see. The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the lepers are cleansed, the dead are raised—to the poor are proclaimed glad tidings." Such is the Saviour's own beautiful summary of his works of power. Love rules amidst the miracles, that rule in their turn over all the elements of nature. Each of them seems, by anticipation, to wrest from death a part of his sting, before the final miracle of

the resurrection, by which his power is overcome and destroyed for ever.

But while such is the dominant character of these miracles, the other attributes of God, His power over all creatures, and His hatred of evil, receive also their due illustration. The fishes of the sea own the dominion of their Lord, and the untamed colt yields Him instinctive obedience. The winds and the waves are hushed by a single word of Divine power, and the tossing sea bears up the footsteps of the Son of God. The water is turned into wine, the bread is multiplied a thousand-fold, by the simple fiat of His will; while the spiritual world is alike subject to his control, and evil spirits, and wicked men, yield him a reluctant and compulsory submission.

The gospel, again, though it is preeminently a message of grace, contains, even in its miracles, some instructive lessons of the Divine holiness, and of the righteous anger of God against all iniquity. Such evidently was the death of Ananias and Sapphira, and the sudden blindness inflicted on the sorcerer Elymas. And though our Lord, that his grace might be the more conspicuous, wrought no direct miracle of judgment upon men, the same truth was twice exhibited in a milder form, and for man's sake, the lower creatures were miraculously visited with judgment. Such was the miracle in Gadara, where two thousand swine perished in the sea of Galilee, a warning to swinish and sensual men; and such also was the sentence on the barren fig-tree, a significant emblem of the desolation soon to come on the Jewish people, for their barrenness in all the fruits of righteousness. The very miracles, which have most excited the cavils of the infidel, serve thus to complete the moral harmony of the gospel message; while the abundant exhibition of Divine grace, in all the other miracles of Christ, is thus tempered by the solemn lesson, that the same power is equally available for the work of righteous judgment.

The history of our Lord's infancy has seemed, in the eyes of modern critics, more open than the rest of the narrative to the

charge of a fabulous origin. We are told, for instance, that the prodigality of miracles, in St. Matthew i. ii. is rather to be ascribed to human imagination than to Divine Providence. Now it is true that, in their eyes, with whom all miracle is an impossibility and contradiction, the charge may seem to be well founded, though it is hard to see why five or six impossibles should be more incredible than one only. But if we recur to the only true test, the design which miracles are to fulfil, as the credentials of a Divine message, the reverse may be maintained with far greater truth. The sparing exhibition of miracles, before our Lord's public ministry began, is a clear mark of contrast between every spurious legend, and the true revelation in the word of God. For let us compare the doctrine with the record, and we shall rather admire the Divine parsimony of the Holy Spirit, than detect the prodigality of human invention. The Word of God, by whom all things were made, is declared to have come down from heaven, to have assumed human nature, and tabernacled among men, for thirty years before His public labours began. During this long season, how many wonders or signs of Divine power are recorded, in connexion with an event of such surprising and mysterious grandeur ! Three angelic visions, four intimations of the will of God in a dream, one sign from an unborn infant, two messages to aged Jewish believers, and one heavenly sign for the guidance of the distant Gentiles :—these form the whole array of wonders by which it pleased God to attest the greatest of all marvels, and the noblest of all Divine messages, the incarnation, the birth, and infancy of the Son of God. Surely we have more cause to admire the frugality evinced in the display of miraculous power, during the first years of our Saviour's life, than to admit the senseless charge, that the prodigality of wonders, in this part of the gospels, is suspicious and incredible. Instead of the supernatural events being multiplied, in proportion to their remoteness from the date of the history, we find rather the very opposite. In the book of Acts, during a space of little more than thirty years, more than forty

distinct examples are detailed or affirmed ; or nearly four times as many as are recorded to have happened in thirty years of our Saviour's life, before his public ministry began.

Again, in the distribution of these wonders, a Divine wisdom is no less apparent. One angelic vision is given to predict the birth of our Lord's forerunner, with an infliction on Zacharias, answering to the severer tone of the Baptist's ministry. Two such visions announce the birth of our Lord himself, one addressed to Mary, before the Incarnation, and the other to the shepherds, at the very time of the birth. Four communications are made to Joseph, to teach him the will of God under circumstances so unexampled ; one directing him to his espousal with Mary, and removing a natural suspicion, one to shield the child from Herod, by a flight into Egypt, one to direct his return to Palestine, and one to assign the province where Messiah was to spend his infancy, away from his natural home in Bethlehem or Jerusalem. But all these, as the relation of Joseph to the holy child was less intimate than that of Mary, or of Zacharias to the Baptist, were revelations of the lowest order, not in waking vision, but only by a dream. The other signs, to the Jews, were direct monitions or impulses of the Spirit, as in the case of the infant Baptist, of Simeon and Anna ; and were barely enough to point out the infant Jesus as the promised hope of Israel. The only remaining sign, which was intended for believers in distant lands, and for a pledge of the future triumphs of the gospel throughout the Gentile world, was naturally more splendid and august ; but even here there is seen the same Divine simplicity. One solitary star, or starlike meteor, became the fitting herald of the King of heaven, and Lord of the universe. There was enough of miracle, to usher in the Advent of the long-promised Messiah with due solemnity ; but the fulness was reserved for His actual proclamation of the holy and heavenly message, which He was commissioned to bear to the sinners of mankind.

Thus a calm review of the gospel miracles, in connexion with the purpose they were professedly designed to fulfil, discovers in

them the clearest traces of Divine wisdom and goodness. Instead of presenting an insuperable objection to the credibility of the narrative, they lend it a powerful confirmation, from their evident contrast with all the fables of human invention, and their entire adaptation, without exhibiting any waste of Divine power, to fulfil their main object, and seal the heavenly commission and Divine glory of the Son of God.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY IN THE GOSPELS.

THE alleged fulfilment of Divine prophecy in the life of our blessed Lord, no less than his works of Divine power, is a stumbling-block to the infidel philosophy of modern times. The theory which its patrons advance may be summed up as follows ; that the so-called prophecies were later than the events, or else refer merely to occurrences close at hand, which the prophet could foresee by his own wisdom ; that they were afterwards applied to a coming Messiah by popular error alone ; that these popular misinterpretations gave birth to an idea of the Messiah, which in its turn gave birth to the gospel narratives, so that these were entirely originated by the preconceived idea of what the promised Messiah was to be and to do. And hence, whenever a correspondence is found between the predictions of the Old Testament, and the narrative in the New, this is held to be a clear sign, that such part of the narrative is unreal and legendary. On the Christian view, all these statements are exactly reversed. The life of Jesus and his shameful death are asserted to have been so diverse from the popular expectation of the Jews, as to have been the chief occasion of their stubborn unbelief ; and still to have agreed so remarkably with various prophecies, received by the Jews themselves as Divine, that it proves the predictions to be inspired messages of God, and Jesus the true Messiah, of whom the prophets had spoken from the beginning of time.

Here the first inquiry must be—Did the history of our Lord, as related in the gospels, agree so closely with the national expectations concerning the Messiah, that it could possibly have been created, as a legend, out of these popular ideas and impressions of the Jewish people? This is the main postulate of the infidel theory now examined, and it is totally, nay even preposterously, untrue. The leading fact in the whole history of the New Testament, confirmed by the palpable evidence of the nation's history for eighteen hundred years, is the entire contrast between the popular expectation of the Jews, and the Divine reality in the life and death of Jesus. It is far easier that grapes should come from thorns, and figs from thistles, than that our Lord's history should have been formed out of popular and floating traditions of the Messiah, to which, in all the main features, it stands out in marked and conspicuous contrast. Even the disciples themselves, as the gospels clearly teach us, were delivered, only by slow and painful steps, from the mighty hindrance, which their preconceived notions opposed to the very possibility of their faith in the Messiahship of Jesus.

Nor is this the only falsehood in the infidel hypothesis. It assumes that a series of entire misinterpretations, having no ground in the text of the prophecies, could yet assume such consistency of outline, as to create the conception of a character, almost of superhuman excellence. Nay, more, that they led to an attempt, in the Augustan age, to pass off the conception as an historical fact, realized in the character and conduct of an obscure Jewish peasant; of one who had no Divine mission, and wrought no miracle, but was received as Messiah by tens of thousands, because they ascribed to him works he never wrought, and words he never uttered, that they might embody in his person their own view of Scriptures, which they never understood, and which had no reference to him whatever. Surely, among all the follies of science falsely so called, none can exceed this monstrous claim on the credulity of mankind.

But let us now inquire what must be the character of prophecy

and of its fulfilment, in order to give the utmost weight to the evidence it yields for its own Divine origin, and its real accomplishment in the events ; and then see whether this test, in spite of the cavils of unbelief, is not precisely satisfied in the gospel history.

A prophecy, then, which gives a detailed prediction, whether of an individual life, or a nation's history, in regular order, with minute and specific circumstances, so that every one must see, at the first glance, the series of events required for its fulfilment, must be exposed, in later times, to two grave suspicions. It may be urged, with some plausibility, either that it was written after the events, and thus is no real prophecy whatever, or else that it has received an artificial fulfilment, by the direct and concerted efforts of many interested parties, to bring it to pass. On the other hand, predictions so vague, that they will bear almost any meaning, become useless as evidence for an opposite reason ; since they may be accommodated, with almost equal plausibility, to any series of events whatever. And hence the evidence, resulting from fulfilled prophecy, must have the greatest force, when it bears an intermediate character : when it is sufficiently disconnected and obscure, to exclude the idea of a concerted and artificial fulfilment ; and so perspicuous, after the events have once occurred, is to prove that no other series of events could have answered so remarkably to the statements of the Divine record.

Now the fulfilment of prophecy, in the gospels, has exactly this character, in which the evidence of truth, all things considered, is the most powerful ; and is equally removed from the possibility of collusive conspiracy, and of strained and violent accommodation. That the former is here excluded is proved by the fact, that the main feature in our Lord's history, his violent death was not the work of his disciples, but resulted, to their utter grief and dismay, from the malice of his bitterest enemies. That the predictions were not so clear as to give any handle for plausible suspicion on that side, is plain from the admission of the adversaries themselves, who deny that they mean at all

what the Evangelists assume. It only remains to shew that the real correspondence is far too clear and striking, and too various in its elements, to be explained by any other means than the inspiration of the prophecies, and a real fulfilment in the life of the Lord Jesus.

The passages in the gospels, where a fulfilment of prophecy is directly asserted, are these: Matt. i. 22, 23; ii. 5, 6; ii. 15; ii. 17, 18; ii. 23; iii. 3; iv. 15, 16; viii. 17; xi. 10, 14; xii. 17—21; xii. 39, 40; xiii. 14, 15, 35; xvi. 4; xxi. 4, 5, 42—44; xxvi. 31, 54; xxvii. 9, 10, 34, 35. Mark ix. 12, 13; xv. 28, 34. Luke i. 17, 31—33; iii. 4—6; iv. 17—21; viii. 27; xi. 29, 30; xviii. 31—33; xx. 17; xxii. 37; xxiv. 44. John i. 23; vii. 42; xii. 14—16, 37—41; xiii. 18; xv. 25; xix. 24, 28—30, 36, 37; xx. 9, and the chief of those to which reference is made, are Psalm xxii. 1; xix. cxviii. 22. Isa. vii. 14; vi. 9, 10; ix. 1, 2, 3; xl. 3; xlii. 1—4; liii. lxi. 1, 2. Jer. xxxi. 15. Hos. xi. 1. Jon. i. 17. Mic. v. 2. Zech. ix. 9; xi. 12, 13; xii. 10; xiii. 7. Mal. iii. 1.

In some of these, the reference is so plain, and the fulfilment so exact, as to require no comment, as in Psalm xxii. Isa. liii. Mic. v. 2. Zech. ix. 9. Isa. xlii. 1—4, which are all expressly applied to our Saviour in the gospels. To prove the folly and perplexity of those who attempt to disguise this fact, it is enough to quote the explication of Mic. v. 2, in the *Leben Jesu*. The words of the prophecy read as follows: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that shall be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth." Here we are assured that the prediction can only be applied to Messiah's birth-place, "by forcing the words from their true meaning, and all relation to the context. For whether or not the Messiah be intended, the context shews the meaning to be, not that the expected governor would be born in Bethlehem, but that he would be a descendant

of David, whose family sprung from Bethlehem." In proof we are referred to Paulus and De Wette, the former of whom, by the shewing of the writer himself, has perpetrated more critical follies, in defence of rationalism, than almost any one could have deemed possible ; and the latter is nearly of the same school, and of equal authority. In deference to their absurd gloss, we are required to renounce the express words of the text, that the governor himself, and not some distant forefather, was to come out of Bethlehem, the meaning which every reader, Jew or Christian, except these two German unbelievers, has always seen in the passage for more than two thousand years. The context, instead of justifying the proposed gloss, directly excludes it, since it connects the mention of Bethlehem with the actual birth of Messiah in days to come ; when "she that travaileth" shall have brought forth, and the son whom she bears shall feed his people in the strength of the Lord, and shall be great unto the ends of the earth.

There was thus a clear fulfilment, in the Lord Jesus, of the predictions, that Messiah should be born at Bethlehem ; that he should be despised and rejected ; that he should be gentle, meek and lowly ; that the Spirit should rest upon him, to preach the gospel to the poor, and comfort the broken hearted ; that the eyes of the blind should be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped ; that he should enter Jerusalem, riding on a colt, the foal of an ass ; that the builders or rulers of the people should reject him ; that his hands and feet should be pierced ; that he should be numbered with the transgressors, and receive gall and vinegar in his sufferings ; that a messenger, crying in the wilderness, should prepare the way before him ; and that his coming should be followed by a message of peace to the heathen, even to the ends of the earth. These are main, essential parts of the gospel history, and their agreement with express predictions of the Old Testament is clear and demonstrable, so that only the blindness of prejudice can deny it. If all the fulfilments were equally clear, and if the events were of a different nature, dependent

merely on voluntary actions of our Lord or his disciples, the evidence would be weakened, not by the ambiguity, but rather by the extreme plainness of the predictions themselves. The passage in Micah was so plain to the Jews, who knew their own language, that it was made an objection, in their ignorance of the real facts, to the Messiahship of Jesus, John xiii. 41, 42.

A second class of predictions are of a middle kind, more open to plausible dispute, yet still capable of being vindicated, in the gospel sense, by plain and convincing evidence.

The first of these is Isa. vii. 14. The true reference ; it is confidently urged by the mythical theorist, is to some unknown child, to be born in the time of Ahaz, in the usual course of human generation. And hence it is argued that the Evangelist has wrested and misapplied it ; though, when the origin of the history is to be explained, we are told that a belief prevailed among the Jews, in conformity with this very passage, that Messiah was to be born of a virgin, by Divine agency ; and thus it was taken for granted that what was to be must have really occurred. It is owned, however, that traces of this belief are found with difficulty in the early Jewish writings ; while to infer its prevalence before the actual birth of Jesus, from St. Matthew's gospel alone, begs the whole question in dispute, and is an open defiance to all sound historical reasoning.

That the prophecy in Isa. vii. 14, does refer, in the first place, to the birth of a child at the time when the invasion occurred, may be admitted without hesitation. It is required, not only by the immediate purpose of the sign, but by the double reference to vii. 21, 22, and to viii. 1—4, 18. A child was to be born, whose knowledge of good and evil was an appointed limit, before which Pekah and Rezin should both of them be overthrown and slain. The siege would be raised, and the culture of the land be restored, within this limit of time, so that curds and honey might be used for the food of the infant, before it came to know good and evil. The formal record, in viii. 1—4, and the statement in the last verse, proves that this son of Isaiah did, in a certain sense, fulfil

the prophecy. But that this is not the full meaning is equally plain. A sign is offered to Ahaz in the height above, or in the depth beneath, that is, a miracle of the most extraordinary kind, to be a pledge of the Divine protection. On his refusal, the Lord promises to give freely what Ahaz had declared to ask, which implies, therefore, some remarkable miracle, beyond the usual course of nature. Such would be the pregnancy of a virgin, if the word retain its strict and proper sense, but on no other supposition. Again, in viii. 14, the land of Israel is called, by God himself, the land of Immanuel. It is forced and strained to suppose this title given, unless Immanuel were the king of Israel, and not merely a private and obscure person. But above all, the words in Isa. ix. 7 are decisive. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be on his shoulder; and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." It is clear that a child is promised, whose very name shall be Wonderful, because of his miraculous mode of birth, who shall be the owner of the land of Israel, having the government on his shoulder, who shall be honoured under the mysterious and exalted title of the Mighty God, the very name of Jehovah (x. 21,) and who shall enjoy a lasting and eternal dominion. And thus, if we would not degrade this sublime prophecy into a mere piece of wretched bombast, we are compelled to admit the justice and accuracy of the interpretation in St. Matthew's gospel. On this view alone, the whole becomes consistent and harmonious, befitting the largeness of the offer made to the unbelieving monarch, and the grandeur of the description at the close.

Another prediction of the same class is Isa. ix. 1—3, quoted by St. Matthew, as indicating the scene of Messiah's ministry. This has caused some perplexity, when the whole context is examined, since the construction appears to be different in the gospel and in the prophecy. The true rendering seems to connect

ix. 1 with the previous chapter, and to make it one part of the threatening on the Jews. But the inference of St. Matthew is equally just, when the history has been examined, and the allusion correctly explained. The prophet threatens a sore judgment, far exceeding the earlier afflictions, when Israel was first cut short by the Assyrian kings. "For the dimness shall not be such (so slight) as in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Naphthali, and afterwards did more heavily afflict her, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the Gentiles." Then suddenly a transition is made from the affliction to the deliverance, and it is implied that the place where the affliction began to be felt, shall be the earliest to see the dawning of the promised redemption. "The people that sat in darkness have seen a great light; they that sat in the region and shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." The prophet thus intimates, what the event more fully explained, that the same district which first underwent sore distress, in the darkening of the Jewish theocracy, would also be the first to enjoy the dawning light of Messiah's public ministry.

There is a third class of predictions, quoted in the gospels, where the reference to the life of our Lord seems still more open to dispute, so that Christian writers have often regarded them as simple accommodations, while sceptics have turned them into charges of error, or even of deception, against the sacred writers. In these cases there can be no suspicion that the event was garbled, to suit the prophecy, but an opposite censure is advanced, with the more confidence, that the passage is wrested to suit the event. This clearly implies, however, that the events are real, and not legendary. And if, even in this class of allusions, it can be shewn that the quotations are apposite, and rest on a true and real connexion between the event and the prophecy, the evidence derived from these various classes of predictions will be complete. It will thus appear that prophecies, too plain to be misunderstood without the utmost violence, and too obscure to be understood without

the greatest care, and the fullest insight into the analogy of Scripture, all concur in the life of Jesus ; and thus bring to light a harmony, so full and various, between the events and the predictions, as can result only from Divine inspiration.

The first passage of this kind is Hosea xi. 1, quoted Matt. ii. 15. Here the sacred writer is charged with a gross perversion of the meaning. The convenient method of double interpretation, it is said, is inapplicable, because the only point of resemblance is the bare fact of a sojourn in Egypt. This is quite untrue. The passage in Hosea is indeed evidently retrospective and historical in its primary meaning. But this is so plain, as to make the supposition that the writer did not observe it, purely ridiculous. His remark could have no force with any reader, unless it were first assumed that the personal history of Messiah was designed to correspond, in many of its features, with the history of the nation. And that this is the Scriptural view, appears even from the two titles, the seed of Abraham, and Israel, which are given alike to the nation and to the Messiah himself. (Isaiah xlix. 3. Gen. xxii. 17). Viewed in this light, the entire change in the political relations of Egypt with Palestine, only renders the analogy more striking, when the infant Jesus, like the nation in its own infancy, became a sojourner in Egypt, and from the same general reason, an imminent danger of extinction which threatened each of them in the land of Israel.

The next passage, on which a similar charge is founded, is Jer. xxxi. 15, quoted in Matt. ii. 17, 18 ; which is said to refer exclusively to the deportation of the Jews to Babylon, and to have no connexion at all with the event to which it is referred in the gospel. That the immediate reference is to the captivity, is certainly very plain. But this does not exclude the further application, which looks to a mightier enemy than the earthly king of Babylon, and a mightier and more glorious deliverance than the political return to Judea. It is clear that death, in the whole Bible, is described as the first, the last, and mightiest enemy, of the people of God ; and to overcome death, and open

the gate of everlasting life, is the crowning work and victory of the Redeemer. And hence the mourning of Rachel for her children, because they were not, and the promise that they shall return from the land of the enemy, and that there is hope in her end, though deceased long ago, of meeting her children again, restored from the hand of the destroyer, is a lively picture of deliverance, given to the martyred innocents, in the great day of resurrection.

The same charge is brought against Matt. ii. 23, since the words, "He shall be called a Nazarene," are found in no extant prophecy, and to coin one for the purpose is a desperate expedient. But here a little attention will suffice to vindicate the writer, and disclose his real meaning. Wherever he alludes to a particular prophecy of Isaiah, the name of the prophet is given, and in other cases the singular number is invariably used. But here he adopts a different phrase, and one quite indefinite—"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, that he shall be called a Nazarene. Now the change in the form of expression evidently implies a contrast, in the view of the writer himself, between this prediction and the others. If there had been, in his opinion, any one passage, where this circumstance was distinctly foretold, he would doubtless have quoted it, as he does elsewhere. Hence his meaning must be, that there were several prophetic statements, none of them explicit enough for direct quotation, but which, being compared by a serious and humble inquirer, would prove how entirely this Galilean nickname agreed with the predestined character and description of Messiah. The term was used in contempt, and it was foretold that he would be 'despised and rejected of men.' The term *Ναζωραῖος*, is used in the Septuagint for a Nazarite, and there applied to Samson, a type of the great Deliverer; so that the popular use of this term unconsciously fulfilled one minor circumstance in the prophetic types of Messiah. The words in Isaiah xi. 1, where the same title, *netser*, is applied as a name of Christ, is a third fact of the same kind. A fourth passage im-

plies that his ministry would begin in the land of Zebulun and Naphthali, to the former of which tribes Nazareth belonged. These statements, when combined, justify the remark in the gospel, and also account for its indefinite form. It was designed for the use of believers, to exercise their inquiries into the allusive predictions and secret fulness of Scripture; and hence it is not surprising that captious infidels should first mistake its purpose, and then condemn it as a direct falsehood. There are heights and depths in the word of God, beyond the reach of their dim-sighted vision.

Another passage, which may be classed with the above, is Matt. xii. 39, 40, where Jonas is made a typical prophecy of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Here it is maintained, first, that Jesus himself could not have uttered these words, because the disciples would not have been taken so unprepared, when the event arrived; that the disciples would certainly have questioned him on the meaning of the statement, and could not, in this case, have acted as they are said to have done; and finally, that whoever ascribes a typical meaning to the history mistakes its true sense, and the evident design of the author.

These remarks merely pile one error upon another. The gospels have a far more correct view of human nature than our modern sceptics, when they represent the disciples to have been still unprepared, and utterly despondent, after so many predictions by our Lord of his own death. The truth was highly distasteful in itself, and entirely opposed to all their expectations; and hence they would be little disposed to question our Lord upon his meaning, and would rather provide themselves with some strained exposition, that suited their own prejudices. The fact, that our Lord uttered this prediction, is confirmed by the statement in Matt. xxvii. 63, where the enemies of Christ remember it at the very time when it was forgotten by the disciples, and no fact in the gospels rests on surer evidence.

The remark, which denies all typical meaning in the history of Jonah, is not less groundless, though the disproof is less easy.

A history so remarkable might well be supposed, of itself, to contain some further and deeper lesson. Now the leading facts are the judgment on the prophet, where he is left three days and nights in the great deep, his miraculous restoration by the word of God, and his later mission to be the preacher of righteousness to the metropolis of the Gentile world. In all these points the analogy is full and close with our Lord's own history. He also, when he bore the load of judgment, was three days and three nights, in the Jewish reckoning, in Hades, was miraculously restored to life on the third day, and then, by his Apostles, began the great work of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, which has continued ever since to the present hour. We have thus every token, which the nature of the subject allows, that the typical relation does really exist, and that our Lord referred to the history with perfect truth, as a concealed prophecy of his own resurrection, and of the subsequent preaching of the gospel throughout the heathen world.

To sum up the whole, the gospels contain the fulfilment of many prophecies, some of them so clear and distinct, as to defy the violent efforts of unbelieving critics to wrest them from their proper meaning; others, though less plain, capable of demonstrative proof that the Evangelists have interpreted them justly, when their full scope is examined; and others, more obscure, which require for their explanation a deeper view of the harmonies of revealed truth and Divine Providence than unbelieving spirits can ever attain. Now this variety, in the degrees of clearness, renders the collective evidence of the whole the most powerful and impressive. It excludes the opposite suppositions, that the events, from the plainness of the predictions, have been artificially made to correspond with them, or that the predictions have been forced from their true sense, to meet the facts of history. This agreement between the life of Jesus, and such various statements of the prophets, some of them clear as the noon-day sun, and others, dimly deciphered by minute inquiry alone, aided by the analogies of Providence, could result only

from the Divine inspiration of the writings and their real fulfilment in the promised Messiah. Jesus of Nazareth, and He alone, is the true Seed of the Woman, the Son of the Virgin, the pierced Saviour, the meek and lowly King of Israel, the Prince of Peace and Redeemer of Mankind.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE MORAL BEAUTY OF THE GOSPELS.

THERE are three tests, of a moral nature, which must be satisfied by every true revelation. In its main features, and substantial outline, it should commend itself to the awakened conscience of men, as good, and not evil. Yet since the need for such a message implies the existence of moral disease, we must expect that it will contain many difficulties, and statements which the understanding does not easily apprehend, nor the conscience at first approve; as a sickly palate often rejects a bitter, though healing medicine. With every step, however, of moral recovery and progress, these difficulties will melt away, and the exceptions to the approval of the conscience disappear. The fancied defects will then turn into real beauties, and the obscurity, that once perplexed us, resolve itself into the harmony of deeper truth and higher wisdom. In short, those who reach the highest attainments in love to God and to their fellow-men, if the claims of the message are just and well-founded, will be the foremost to own its Divine authority; and will perceive, even in its more obscure and difficult portions, a wise adaptation to the wants of the human heart, and a real harmony with the glorious perfections of its Divine Author.

All these tests are eminently satisfied by the four gospels. The most careless and prejudiced reader can hardly fail to be impressed by the tone of moral purity and heavenly love, which pervades the whole narrative of the life of Jesus. Yet, along

with this lofty tone of pure and holy thought, there are several things, from which the natural man turns aside, at first, with secret perplexity, and sometimes, perhaps, with positive dislike and disgust. But when the heart has once learned to breathe the atmosphere of purity and truth, and to hunger and thirst after righteousness, with every step of moral advancement these clouds disappear, or else are lit up with an inward glory. The character of our Lord, the longer we gaze upon it, becomes the more surpassingly beautiful and Divine. Mysterious doctrines, which once repelled us, are found to be elements essential to the completeness of the message, and one main secret of its moral power; and those who approached at first with suspicious doubt, and cautious inquiry, join at length in the experience of the Samaritans of old, and learn, on a closer and fuller observation, that "this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

Simplicity and authority are two main features, which may be looked for in the moral teaching of a true revelation. The former adapts the message to the great body of mankind; the latter befits the majesty of its author. In the Sermon on the Mount, which stands in the forefront of the earliest gospel, these two characters receive their fullest exhibition. How simple, and how earnest is every part! From the blessings which allure the listening crowd by the attractions of heavenly love, to the warnings at the close, which terrify and alarm the disobedient hearer, all is clear and plain, like the lessons given to a child, yet marked by a tone of regal majesty, as the voice of the King of kings. We feel at once how true to nature is the remark at the close—"And when he had ended these sayings, the multitude were astonished at his doctrine; for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."

The same Divine simplicity, in the moral teaching of the gospels, is not less conspicuous in their promises and invitations, than in the direct precepts. How many hearts have been touched by that brief appeal of the loving Saviour, which is like balm to the sorrowing spirit—"Come unto me, all ye that

travail and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden light." Place these few words side by side with the boastful sayings of pretended philosophy in our own days, and what a contrast do we feel! We read, for instance, the following summary of their improved version of the Christian faith, to suit the advancement of modern times. "Humanity is the worker of miracles, in so far as in the course of human history the spirit more and more completely subjugates nature, both within and around. It is the sinless existence, for the course of its development is a blameless one; pollution cleaves to the individual only, and does not touch the race or its history. It is humanity that dies, rises, and ascends into heaven, for from the negation of its phenomenal life, there ever proceeds a higher spiritual life; from the suppression of its mortality as a terrestrial spirit, arises its union with the infinite spirit of the heavens. By faith in this Christ man is justified before God, that is, by the kindling within him of the idea of humanity, the individual participates in the divinely human life of the species." How deep is the contrast between these swelling words of vanity, and the simplicity, the tenderness, the soul-piercing and heart-comforting power, of that one gracious saying from the lips of the Son of God!

If we turn to another gospel, how striking is the simplicity of those parables, in St. Luke, where the Lord reveals his own compassion to guilty and wandering sinners! The laboured declamations of philosophy pass over the heart like the idle wind, and leave behind them no trace of their presence; but these words of a Saviour's love pierce into the spirit, like the gentle dew, and the showers of heaven. Who can read the description of the lost sheep in the wilderness, and the care of the shepherd, who lays it on his shoulder, and returns rejoicing to his friends, or the solemn declaration, at the close, of the joy of angels over one penitent sinner, or the touching account of the

lost prodigal, his lonely and sorrowful reflection, and the greeting of his loving father, and not feel—These are the words of one who spake as never man spake—the Saviour and Redeemer of our fallen world? We need no laborious research of minute criticism, to vindicate their authenticity, and clear the Evangelist from the charge of imposture or deceit. This voice is not the voice of a deceiver. It proceeds from one who has sounded the depths of the human heart, and, while he is touched with the feeling of its sorrows, is conscious that he can offer a Divine remedy for its darkest griefs and deepest miseries. For two thousand years these simple words have been the solace of weary and desolate hearts; and long after the laborious trifling of learned infidels has been lost in oblivion, they will retain their healing and hallowing power, and reveal to ransomed prodigals the rich mercy and grace of their Father in heaven.

If these, however, were the sole contents of the gospels, it may be thought that there would be less difficulty in admitting their claims. But what, then, shall we say of these portions, which betray mere Jewish prejudice, and cross the dictates of enlightened reason? Why should a Divine revelation begin with a barren genealogy, a list of names of no interest whatever? How comes it to describe a personal appearance of the devil, and to make possession by devils a frequent and usual occurrence? How can we believe that the Creator of all things should become a creature; that He should assume the form of a Jewish peasant; that He should then confine His labours to one insignificant province, and end His course by a shameful death? How can we suppose that the God of love should need to be appeased by a human sacrifice? How is it that, at one time, open adultery is sheltered from its deserved punishment; at another, every jot and tittle of the Jewish law is enforced; and at another, its express enactments are set aside? How can we believe that a legion of devils entered into a herd of swine, or that a fig-tree was cursed, because it did not bear fruit out of the due season,

or that hatred of our dearest friends should be the real test of every true and genuine disciple of a gospel of peace and love?

These difficulties, and others of the same kind, prove that the gospels have the second mark of a true revelation—partial obscurity to the mind and conscience of fallen man. A wisdom, which every careless reader might fathom, could not possibly be the wisdom of God. A message, which told us nothing, but what we already knew, and felt to be reasonable, could not be a message from the Almighty and All-wise Creator. The difficulties of revelation are needful, to shew that it is indeed a revelation, and not a mere effluence from the unaided wisdom of men. Only, if this be their true origin, we shall find that many of them disappear, as we obtain a growing insight into the purpose of the message, and the wants of mankind, and even resolve themselves into deeper lessons of Divine love and holiness, and thus become new attestations to the Divine authority of the whole record.

These remarks apply to all the difficulties, to which allusion has just been made. It may be useful to trace out briefly, in each instance, the real harmony with the general design of the sacred narrative, as a true revelation of the word of God.

The genealogy, then, may appear dry and repulsive, or needless and unnatural, on a casual view. But closer thought will reveal to us the Divine wisdom, in this opening of the gospel history. For what is the purpose of the whole? It is not to exhibit moral maxims, or mysterious doctrines, in an abstract form, devoid of all historical interest, and without any credentials of their celestial origin. It is to unite the certainty of historical fact, with the ideal grandeur of a message, revealing eternal truth. In the gospel history, it is further to exhibit the unity and harmony of the Divine counsels, preparing the way through long ages, and by more imperfect revelations, for a crowning exhibition of the truth, wisdom, and goodness of the Most High. It was equally needful, as modern experience has shewn, to guard against the perverseness that would set aside the super-

natural authority of the message, and the speculative absurdity which would deny its reality as a fact, and dismiss the whole into the region of airy fancies. The gospels, in their actual form, meet these opposite delusions. But first of all, as was reasonable, they establish the reality of the events, and trace the descent of the Lord Jesus through a series of generations, so as to link the history of his life with all the most faithful records of previous ages ; while it is equally linked, by the book of Acts, and the Epistles of St. Paul, with the first origin of the Christian Church, and the whole course of Providence in later times. It is only after this first requisite has been secured, that they pass on to the higher aspects of the message, the triumph of our Lord over Satanic temptation, and the full exhibition of His holy commands and gracious promises to the children of men.

Again, it was important, for the main end of the Christian revelation, that it should be seen to be no accident or second thought, but the result of a scheme of Providence, perfect and complete from the beginning. The genealogy, in the simplest and briefest manner, indicates this great truth. We are there reminded that the Lord Jesus Christ was "the son of David, the son of Abraham," and that his life is the fulfilment of promises, made to the patriarch two thousand years before, and confirmed, a thousand years later, to the royal Psalmist of Israel. The brief list of his forefathers, from Abraham to David, from David through the line of kings to the captivity, and from the captivity to his own birth, reveals to us a secret purpose of God, carried on in unbroken course through all former ages, and preparing the way for this great Advent in every step of the history of the chosen people ; till at length, "when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, made under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Nay, even the very omission, which has caused so many cavils, is only a passing exhibition, in this brief list, of the great moral lesson, that God visits the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation ; so that

three generations of ungodly and idolatrous kings are blotted out from this record of the forefathers of the Incarnate Son of God.

The doctrine of Satanic agency and demoniacal possession, so repeatedly taught in the gospels, has been another stumbling-block to unbelieving minds. And yet, upon a calmer reflection, these may well be thought one internal proof of their Divine origin. It is highly reasonable, on abstract grounds, to believe that there are other intelligent creatures of God, besides the race of mankind. It is hardly less reasonable to believe that the severe conflict of good and evil, which is apparent among men, extends also to these other creatures, and that it may probably reveal itself there in a simpler contrast, of perfect goodness on the one side, and malignant evil on the other. It agrees with all the analogies of experience, in the working of evil amongst men, to believe that it tends to a despotism of the strongest, or natural power over all creatures of like depravity, but of inferior power and capacity. Yet it is plain that our clearer insight into this world of spiritual being must come to us, if it be given at all, by revelation from heaven. And hence it agrees fully with the dictates of sound reason, when it considers the contracted range of human experience, and the width of the moral universe, to recognize the existence of a mighty Prince of evil, and of numerous spirits, who constitute, under him, the mighty array of a kingdom of darkness. It is equally reasonable to believe that their power, to eyes not enlightened by the truth of God, should remain hidden and disguised behind second causes; and only discover its true nature, when confronted by a mightier power of goodness, and a clearer vision than that of sinful men. And such, accordingly, is the view of Satanic agency which the gospels unfold. They exhibit the Prince of darkness in eager opposition to the Righteous and Holy Son of God. Without defining for curious minds the exact manner of the spiritual conflict, they present it as a great reality, embody it to our faith in three forms of temptation, which comprise the whole range of spiritual evil, and represent the victory to be gained, in every

point, by a direct appeal to the word and will of the living God. Every other statement, in the gospel history, of the expulsion of demons, is only a corollary from this great contest at the opening of our Lord's ministry, and a preparation for the still more intense conflict at the close; when the Prince of the world was cast out from his usurped dominion, and a mightier power of redeeming love and reconciling mercy was brought to bear, with Divine efficacy, on the sins and miseries of our fallen race.

Again, the doctrine of the Incarnation naturally forms a great stumbling-block to the unbelieving spirit. But the more closely we look into the nature of the gospel, the more evident it becomes that this mystery is the main-spring of the whole economy of grace, the moving power in the great system of redeeming love. It is the infinite condescension of the Son of God that gives beauty to his example, authority to his warnings, virtue to his sacrifice, and a world-wide significance to every word he uttered and every action he performed here below. The whole power of the gospel to move and subdue the hearts of men, is contained in that brief statement of the beloved disciple. "We have seen, and do testify that the Father sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." And hence the mystery of godliness, though incontrovertibly great and wonderful, can never be set aside, without annulling the very nature of the gospel, and transforming it, from a quickening and mighty revelation of Divine love; drawing the heart to heavenly things, into a lifeless code of morals, without any power to cope with the natural selfishness of the human heart.

Again, it may seem strange that the ministry of Jesus, if his true nature be such as the gospels imply, should be confined almost entirely to the little province of Galilee, and not extended through the wide range of the Roman Empire, which was then in the height of power, splendour, and civilization. But this difficulty will disappear on further reflection. If the sphere of

our Lord's outward ministry were to be measured by the inherent glory of His person, not Galilee alone, but the whole earth, would have been far too limited a scene for the manifestation of His works of love. But if we view that ministry in its true light, as a condescension of Divine love to human weakness, and a pattern of holiness to all ranks and classes of men, this purpose would be marred equally by an excessive expansion, as by an extreme contraction, of the visible sphere in which it was carried on. We are also taught, by the parable of the mustard seed, that this economy of grace is in entire harmony with the works of God in the natural world ; since it is from minute seeds that the Divine wisdom unfolds all the magnificent variety of plants and trees, which adorn and beautify the surface of the globe. How, then, can we wonder that a message of love should begin first in a little seed, though its final purpose is to clothe the moral wilderness with beauty, and to make "the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose?"

The doctrine of the Atonement, like that of the Incarnation, is doubtless felt by many to be an immense difficulty in the way of their full acceptance of the gospels, and a counterpoise to their pure and exalted morality. Such a subject is too solemn, and also too vast and glorious, to be duly examined in this place. It is enough to remark, that those who have made the highest attainments in spiritual experience, in love to God, and holy benevolence towards their fellow-men, are the very persons who see in this doctrine the chief excellence and crowning glory of the Christian revelation. Far from being an offence to them, it is the main subject of their adoring contemplation, the truth, above all others, in which they behold the glory of the Most High. The experience of the great apostle finds a daily echo in their own hearts, and they learn to count all things else mere vanity, compared with the excellency of the knowledge of Christ and His dying love. The truth, which clears up the difficulties of the fallen heart, and reconciles the contrasted perfections of the Most High, cannot fail to be itself mysterious, and beyond

the full comprehension of our dim-sighted understanding. But it is a sufficient pledge of its truth and moral beauty, that, with every step in moral advancement, it shines on the heart with a fuller radiance, and the clouds and darkness, which seemed at first to surround it, melt away more and more into the pure effulgence of heavenly love. "Mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace embrace each other." The loving kindness of God is revealed in its brightest form, and grateful hearts yield their willing incense of adoring praise and devout thanksgiving. The zeal of St. Paul, the love of St. John, the bold fidelity of Luther, the benevolence of Howard, the missionary zeal of a Brainerd and a Martyn, and of all the devoted labourers who have changed many a moral waste into a garden of the Lord, are due to this one source, and have filled their urns from this one fountain of light and love. It is the view of a dying Saviour, and His atoning sacrifice, which has melted their hearts, moulded their spirits into the image of His love, and filled them with holy zeal for His glory, till they have not counted their lives dear to them, that they might finish their course with joy in the service of the Lord Jesus.

The same principle, which is seen most clearly in this great central doctrine of the faith, applies also to the secondary details of the gospel history. There is hardly one difficulty in the eyes of the scorner or the careless reader, which does not reveal, to humble and diligent inquiry, a new evidence of Divine wisdom. Even in the minutest details, there beams out a moral significance; and those works of power, or startling sentences of our Lord, which perplex at the first, yield, on a closer view, the most convincing proofs of His secret glory. What deep lessons, for instance, are taught us, in the cure of the Gadarene, of the debasing character, the destructive issues, and the blind fatuity, of all wickedness! What an alarming parable is set before our eyes, of the downward course of sensual sinners, the slaves of swinish lust, urged on in their mad career by the secret power of the spirits of darkness! In the doom of the fig-tree, when

the real circumstances are once explained, how striking is the double truth, that the lower creatures are made subject to vanity through the sin of man ; and that a nation which neglects the season of privilege, and fails to produce the fruits of righteousness under the leaves of a fair profession, will be condemned, like the people of the Jews, after they rejected the gospel, to long degradation and lasting barrenness. And thus, the more closely we search into the holy record of the life of Jesus, and compare the gospels with each other, meditating on them with a calm and thoughtful mind, the brighter will they seem, in every part, with the reflected beams of Divine wisdom and love. The words of the apostle, amidst all the cavils of scorners, and the folly of vain theorists, will be fulfilled in our delightful experience, and beholding in them as in a glass, the glory of the Lord our Saviour, we shall be “ changed into the same image, from glory to glory,” by the quickening power of the Spirit of God.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE SPIRITUAL CHARACTER OF ST. MATTHEW'S GOSPEL.

THE Four Gospels, viewed simply as human histories, have been shewn to bear special relations to each other, to the position of their authors, and the successive stages of the early church, besides their common purpose, as records of the life of Jesus. In their higher aspect, as inspired messages from God, the same double character of unity and diversity will probably be found to exist. Their common object, to reveal the person and work of the Son of God, will not exclude a peculiar adaptation, in each gospel, to unfold some special aspect of the Christian revelation. The perfection of Divine wisdom in their composition will be most apparent, if their historical propriety and truth, with reference to the circumstances of each writer, is joined with a spiritual distinctness and mutual harmony, in their higher character as messages of eternal truth from the God of heaven.

This view, which assigns a special purpose and character to each gospel, has prevailed in the Church from the earliest days. From the time of Irenæus, Augustine, and Jerome, the Evangelists have been popularly associated with the four cherubic symbols; and while the application of the three first has varied, St. John has been constantly represented by the emblem of the eagle. The most usual view has been that of Jerome, who refers the man to St. Matthew, the lion to St. Mark, and the calf or ox to

St. Luke. And though it is very unlikely that the four Evangelists are personally denoted by those Apocalyptic emblems, yet since they clearly exhibit four varieties of spiritual intelligence in the heavenly places, it is reasonable to believe that the gospels may be designed to reveal the character of our Lord, in four distinct forms of spiritual excellence and grace.

Let us dwell first on these emblems themselves. They appear, from the context (Rev. v. 6), to represent redeemed humanity in its noblest and highest attainments. The living creatures take precedence even of the crowned elders in their ceaseless worship. They seem to denote four distinct classes, each federally united, among those blessed saints, who occupy the foremost places in the kingdom of glory. There is also a general consent, among the most cautious interpreters, as to the spiritual features which each emblem is meant to portray. The face of a lion, according to Vitringa, denotes "that lofty affection of mind, by which the ministers of Christ, like heroes, boldly resist the world and the devil;" according to Scott, it is "the known emblem of courage and magnanimity. The calf, or young ox, implies that "they are constant, assiduous, upright, laborious, in fulfilling their office, and prepared to sustain great labours;" or again, "strength, hardiness, and patient endurance of labour." The face of a man is expounded, by one, to denote "humanity, clemency, moderation, and prudence;" and by the other, "prudence, benevolence and compassion." Lastly, the eagle, as nearly all agree, denotes "penetration, soaring beyond earthly things, the contemplation of heavenly objects, and clearness in discerning the deepest mysteries of Divine truth."

Again, the lion is joined in the same context with a remarkable title of our Lord, "the lion of the tribe of Judah," and thus clearly imports that he is a Conqueror and a King. The law of Moses, respecting the ox that treads out the corn, is declared, again, by St. Paul, to be an express type of the preachers of the gospel, the spiritual labourers in the vineyard of the Lord; while the eagle instinctively suggests the idea of a keen and pene-

trating vision, which can gaze on the brightness of the meridian sun, or discover objects at an immense distance from its lofty mountain home.

When the four living creatures are viewed in their order, around the throne, they will offer a double contrast. If the eagle denotes celestial contemplation, the calf or young ox, which is bound most closely to the soil, will fully represent the opposite pole of spiritual excellence, in external activity, practical labour, and the fulfilment of duty in all the various details of outward life. One will denote that lofty thought, which expatiates amidst the prophecies of the distant future, or the higher mysteries of the faith; and the other, the laborious diligence, which breaks the clods with the plough in the seed-time, or treads out patiently the corn of the ripened harvest.

Again, the lion and the man form a second spiritual contrast. The beast of prey, sudden and terrible in its spring, may fitly represent the Divine righteousness in the punishment of evil; while the face of man expresses sympathy, compassion, and grace. One looks to the east or sun-rise, and implies a retrospect of the past; the other, looking to the west, anticipation of the future. And hence we obtain these four cardinal ideas, for the true meaning of the sacred emblems; kingly righteousness, with hatred of evil, and judicial equity and retribution; laborious diligence, and external activity, in the fulfilment of immediate duties, each in its season; human sympathy and compassion, with hopeful anticipation of good things to come; and lastly, the contemplation of heavenly and eternal truth.

When we compare these leading ideas with the four gospels, the correspondence in the fourth and last is very manifest. A tone of lofty contemplation and heavenly mystery, like the keen vision of the eagle, is conspicuous there from its opening to its close. The gospel of St. Matthew is also marked by a tone of kingly authority, and abounds in warnings of God's retributive justice. St. Mark unfolds the minute details of our Lord's ministerial labours, and exhibits, more plainly than the

rest, his unwearied diligence in works of love. And certainly the gospel of St. Luke abounds in the richest exhibitions of the compassion of Jesus ; while the words at its close, and the history of the church which follows, carry our thoughts onward, by a continual progress, and joyful anticipation, to the full and final triumph of redeeming love.

The gospel of St. Matthew, if these views are just, reveals our Lord as the true Lawgiver and Righteous king, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, who will execute sudden judgment on His enemies. Let us inquire how far its peculiarities are explained by this view of its peculiar design.

The gospel opens with the words, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." These form the key-note of the whole message which it contains. Two names are singled out from the whole line of our Lord's ancestry, because they recall two main eras of prophecy, in which He was announced as the future King. "Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies ; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Messiah is here predicted as a victorious King, who should subdue all His enemies, and bless the whole earth with His righteous dominion. The other title refers to the promise in the second Psalm. "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession ;" or in Psalm cxxxii. "The Lord hath sworn a faithful oath to David, he will not shrink from it : of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne." Our Lord is exhibited from the first as the heir of all these ancient promises ; the Branch of righteousness, who should grow up to David, and who was to "reign and prosper and execute judgment and justice in the earth."

This prominence of the kingly character marks the following genealogy. Our Lord's descent is traced through the royal line of Judah ; and the only title of honour, in the whole series, is that of David the king. The other break is equally significant, since the royal line closed at the captivity of Babylon.

The frequent quotation of the prophecies, as fulfilled in our Lord, is a main feature of St. Matthew's gospel. Its effect is to link the gospel of Christ with the whole course of sacred history, and to impress upon it a thoroughly retrospective character, while it is further exhibited as the proof of God's veracity, and the perfect consummation of all legal righteousness. The very first of these quotations has a direct reference to the kingly office of Jesus. It was given to king Ahaz in a time of political alarm, to be a pledge of national deliverance, and closes with a glorious description of Immanuel, on whose shoulder the government would be laid, whose name should be called THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

The same aspect of our Lord's character is conspicuous in the narrative of the Epiphany. The vision of the star leads the thoughts at once to Balaam's prophecy, where he announces a Sceptre to arise out of Israel, that should subdue all His enemies. It is as King of the Jews, that the wise men seek His birth-place, and that he excites, in his very infancy, the alarm and malice of Herod ; and the scribes direct the cruel monarch to the prophecy of "a Governor, that shall rule his people Israel." As a king, our Lord receives the presents of the wise men, and is shielded by a special providence from the malice of the usurper, Herod. A crown of royal dignity, from the very first, is here made to encircle the brows of the infant Jesus.

Again, the messages in this gospel are those addressed to Joseph alone, and not to Mary. For Joseph was the legal guardian, and it was through a legal adoption by Joseph, that Jesus was not only a descendant from David, but a direct legal successor to the royal line of the kings of Judah. The aged Jew, who died before the church was founded, was a fit representative of the integrity and righteousness of the elder dispensation ; just as the virgin, who survived the day of Pentecost, and was numbered among the first disciples, may represent the humility and grace of the new dispensation. The gospel, in this respect, further manifests its double character, in looking backward on the

past, and crowning the law and the prophets by the revelation of the Righteous King.

The removal to Nazareth, as here described, has the same reference. Bethlehem is assumed to be the natural and proper home of the king of Israel. It is the temporary occupation of his throne by a cruel usurper, which made a Divine admonition needful, that he should be brought up in a remoter province of Immanuel's own land, in Galilee of the Gentiles ; while the change subserves the indirect fulfilment of various prophecies.

The ministry of the Baptist, which follows, has the same character strongly impressed upon it. He appears as the herald, announcing the advent of the great King. He is introduced abruptly, with the words on his lips—"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The prominent feature in his message, as reported by this Evangelist, is the solemn warning to the rebellious Pharisees and Sadducees, and the description of Messiah as a righteous Judge, who will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Even in the account of our Lord's baptism, the two features, of royal dignity and perfect righteousness, are specially developed in the humble address of the Baptist, and in the answer of Jesus, like a king to a subject—"Suffer it now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."

III. The narrative of the temptation has in this gospel the same peculiar features. It is not, as in St. Mark, a forcible constraint of the Spirit, to leave for a time the scene of his active labours ; nor a secret and quiet impulse, as in St. Luke, proceeding from the fulness of spiritual life, which delighted to resist and oppose the will of the devil. It is a candidate for kingly exaltation, whom the Spirit *leads* into the wilderness, that he may there undergo the severest tests of his moral fitness for his destined honour. The order of the temptations varies from St. Luke, and the climax is the offer of all the kingdoms of the world, on the condition of one act of forbidden worship ; while the conflict is closed by the willing homage of ministering angels to the true King and Lord of all.

The opening of our Lord's own ministry is equally characteristic of his kingly office. It begins with a reference to the prophecy of Emmanuel's dominion, quoted before; and is there described as a light breaking out in the darkness, and a reversal of all the former captivities and woes of Israel. Its first voice, like that of the Baptist, is an abrupt proclamation of the kingdom of heaven. Even in the brief summary of the first circuit through Galilee, the same feature is apparent; and the glad tidings of the kingdom are placed in the foreground, confirmed by our Lord's various works of power and love.

IV. The Sermon on the Mount is one of the most distinctive features of the first gospel. The Evangelist seems to hasten to it, across the many marvels which attended the opening of our Lord's ministry; as if he felt it to be one main object of his work, to record this simple and sublime outline of Christian morality. It breathes, in every part, the clear accents of a Lawgiver and a King. Its opening verses describe the character of those whom the king will enroll among his true subjects, and who shall thus inherit "the kingdom of heaven." From v. 17, to vii. 12, all is occupied with one great theme, well defined by the sublime introduction, which forms its preface—"Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall not pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." The relation of our Lord to the messages of the law and the prophets, as their true completion, and his authority as the Lawgiver, greater than Moses, are the key-notes which run through the whole discourse. Its close reveals more expressly His future exercise of royal authority—"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, &c. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." The tenor of the whole is summed up by the

Evangelist in the remark at the close—"He taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes." It was, throughout, the voice of Christ, as the Sovereign Lawgiver and the eternal King.

V. The record of the miracles chap. viii. has a peculiar tone. They are given briefly, with little of historic detail, in a sententious and abstract form. In the healing of the leper, the word of power is most conspicuous—"I will, be thou clean." In the cure of the centurion's servant, the chief feature is a regal authority over all disease, illustrated by the centurion's authority over his soldiers and servants; with a prophecy of the wide range of Messiah's kingdom, and the exclusion of the unfaithful from its blessings. Even the numerous cures are recorded in a peculiar aspect, not as the simple results of Divine compassion, but as the fulfilment of one predicted character of the true Messiah. "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet—Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." The crossing of the lake is marked, in this gospel alone, as the result of an express command; and the brief account of the storm has for its main feature his absolute dominion over the winds and the waves. The same tone is conspicuous in the cure of the demoniacs. It is brief, sententious, and solemn. No secondary details are introduced, but simply the humbling appeal of the wicked spirits, and the word of power, with its immediate issues, that reveal the royal dominion and majesty of the Lord Jesus.

Having thus set before us the king of Israel in a sevenfold series of works of power, the writer reverts, as we have seen, to an earlier point of time, and presents a further series, also sevenfold, of works of power linked and combined with messages of grace. We have first, in the cure of the palsy, his authority, as the Son of man, to forgive all sins, ratified by the healing of bodily disease. We have next, in the call of Matthew, and the answer to the Pharisees, the power and grace of Christ, as the physician of souls, with his power to secure the willing obedience of sinners. We have, thirdly, his authority, as king, to loose

the heavy burden of ceremonial restraints and Pharisaic tradition. Fourthly, in the healing of the issue, we have a voice of comfort to weak and timorous faith. Fifthly, in the raising of the ruler's daughter, we have his dominion over death. Finally, in the cure of the blind man, and of the dumb demoniac, we have his kingly character as the promised Son of David, and the testimony of the general conscience to his works, as surpassing all the wonders which God had wrought, even amongst his chosen people Israel, in the days of old ; with a warning of the unbelief and blasphemy, by which the leaders of the Jews would reject and disown their rightful Sovereign.

VI. The Apostolic commission is another distinctive portion of the first gospel. Its tone, throughout, is the proclamation of a coming kingdom by public heralds. It is prefaced by the statement, that Jesus went about all the cities and villages, preaching the glad tidings of the kingdom. It opens with the charge to the twelve—"As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." It continues with a warning of the day of judgment, and the promise, "Ye shall not have finished the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." Our Lord speaks in it with the tone of a victorious conqueror—"Think not that I am come to send peace upon the earth ; I am not come to send peace, but a sword." And it closes with an assurance from the King to his servants, even in the humblest and meanest acts of obedience, of a blessed and full reward.

VII. The sevenfold series of Parables, chap. xiii. are the next distinctive portion of this gospel. Of these, two only are recorded by St. Mark, and only the first, on this occasion, by St. Luke, who also records two others on a later repetition. Now these seven parables all refer to the kingdom of heaven. They even appear to constitute a complete prophetic series, from the first seed-time of the gospel, in the days of our Lord and his Apostles, to the final ingathering and great separation, in the last days of the Christian Church. The first of them, which is common to the two other gospels, has no special reference to our Lord's

kingly office. But in the parable of the tares, and of the net cast into the sea, this reference is most manifest. The whole series exhibits, in a striking manner, the two features of present forbearance, with the final exercise of righteous judgment, when the Son of man shall openly assume His kingdom, and reign for ever. In this gospel alone there is an express reference to the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy in the blindness of the Jews, where it is connected with the judgment upon them of political desolation.

VIII. The structure of the gospel, in this irregular portion, where alone there is a serious deviation from the order of time by any of the four writers, may be simply explained by this view of its special design. A revelation of our Lord, as the true King, would naturally imply the following main features, and lead to the order in which they are presented in this gospel. I. The Laws and Ordinances of the Righteous King, chap. v—vii. II. The Authority of the King, shown in his power over ceremonial pollution, viii. 2—4, all varieties of disease, viii. 5—17, his own disciples, ver. 18—23, the elements of nature, ver. 23—27, and the spirits of darkness, ver. 28—34. III. The Gracious Character of the King, in his forgiveness of sin, ix. 2—8, in his grace to publicans and sinners, ix. 9—13, his removal of burdens, ver. 14—17, his encouragement of timorous faith, ver. 20—22, his power to deliver from death, ver. 18—26, his compassion to all suppliants for his grace, ver. 27—35. IV. The Open Proclamation of his Kingdom, chap. x. V. Its Relation to the Divine Precursors of its approach, chap. xi. VI. Its Actual Conflict with Jewish rebellion and unbelief, chap. xii. Its Future Development and Final Triumph, chap. xiii. There is thus a doctrinal and moral completeness in this irregular portion of the gospel, when contemplated with reference to the spiritual design of the whole narrative.

IX. The course of events which follow, till the Transfiguration, and which are given in order of time, refer to the common object of all the gospels, rather than to the especial revelation

of our Lord's kingly office, though traces of its peculiar character are still apparent. Thus the passage, Matt. xv. 29—31, compared with the incident in Mark vii. 31—37, and the account of Peter's walking on the sea, xiv. 28—23, have a distinctive air of calm, royal majesty. But this feature comes to light again more plainly at the close of this middle portion of the gospels. The incident of the tribute-money, which is given in this gospel only, has a direct and immediate reference to the claim of our Lord, as the rightful King of Israel; while the parable xviii. 23—35, unfolds the principles of His government, when He will take account of His servants, and render judgment without mercy to the unmerciful.

X. Several marks of this peculiar relation to our Lord's kingly office appear in the following chapters, until the close of His public ministry. Here alone we find the promise to the Apostles fully given—"In the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Here alone we find the parable of the labourers in the vineyard, of which the chief lesson is the exercise of Divine sovereignty in the outward administration of the kingdom of God; and that of the king who made a marriage for his son. The entrance into Jerusalem is marked, more fully than in the other gospels, as the direct fulfilment of prophecy, and the coming of the promised King of Zion. The woes on the scribes and Pharisees are summed up in the language of a monarch, whose care has been despised, and his authority disowned, and who was about to forsake his people, until the time when they should welcome their rightful sovereign, xxiii. 34—39. Finally, the parables, chap. xxv. refer entirely to our Lord's work of judgment; and the passage, xxv. 31, 34, 40, is perhaps the only place where He expressly claims to himself this emphatic title of "the King."

XI. Again, the brief account of the resurrection, in this gospel, bears a peculiar impress of royal majesty. The mighty angel, whose presence terrifies the soldiers, is only one of the minister-

ing servants of the true king, and invites the women in those expressive words—"Come, see the place where the Lord lay." The abrupt account of the appearance to the women, and the message given them, are the description and message of a king. The parting commission, which forms the closing sentence of the gospel, is a proclamation by our Lord of His supreme authority and lasting dominion. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world. Amen." The gospel, begins with the character of Messiah, as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the promised King of the Jews; and it closes with the full glory of His universal dominion over heaven and earth.

Thus the first gospel, in every part, bears the marks of a secret and spiritual unity. It is emphatically, the gospel of the kingdom. It sets before us the Lord Jesus, in his predicted character as the Righteous Branch, whom the Lord would raise up to David, the King who should reign and prosper, and execute judgment and justice in the earth. The style, throughout, answers to this purpose of the narrative. It is brief, sententious, and authoritative; sparing in all the minuter details of our Lord's history, in his more tender utterances of loving sympathy, or higher revelations of his Divine glory; but copious, full, and various, in its exhibitions of his moral purity, his holy commandments, his warnings of judgment, his denunciations of woe against iniquity, and his promises of future recompense to his faithful servants. It begins with the promise to David, and the lowly reverence of the wise men before the infant Jesus, and leads our thoughts, in its closing sentences, to the gathering of all nations before the judgment-seat of the eternal King.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE IDEAL CHARACTER OF THE SECOND GOSPEL.

THE gospel of St. Mark, viewed in its historical origin, has been proved to be the second in order of time; the work of John Mark, the companion of Peter, Paul, and Barnabas, but especially of Peter, a Jew by birth, a Roman probably by early association and citizenship, as well as by surname; and written in Palestine during the second stage of the early church, when a class of Roman military converts, of whom Cornelius is an example, had been added to the first ingathering of Jewish believers. As a second witness, its purpose was to confirm, rather than to supplement, the previous gospel of St. Matthew; while the marks of an eye-witness, so apparent in many places, and the special relation to St. Peter, alike in what it mentions or conceals, confirm the tradition that it was composed under the inspection, or from the oral narratives, of that great Apostle. It is thus, as Da Costa has very justly observed, the fruit of two testimonies, which meet, coalesce, and mutually confirm each other, the testimony of St. Peter and of St. Matthew. Yet this very resemblance to the first gospel, in nearly all the separate facts which it records, and which has led some to call it, though quite incorrectly, an abridgment of the other, renders its composition less easy to explain, without some further purpose beyond the mere want of a second testimony. But if we can discern, throughout the work, the unity of a new spiritual aspect, in which it exhibits the life of Jesus, we shall have obtained a

full explanation, on the one hand, of its likeness to St. Matthew in the facts it reveals, and on the other, of its variations and omissions, and frequent expansions of his narrative, from the peculiar aspect of our Lord's character which it was designed to portray.

The second living creature, in the Apocalypse, was like a calf or young ox, the natural symbol of strength to labour, and of persevering diligence, in connexion with all the various work of spiritual husbandry. This meaning is clearly taught by the Apostle, in his exposition of the Divine precept—"Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." "Doth God" he inquires, "care for oxen? or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes it is written, that he who ploweth should plow in hope, and he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope." Contrasted with the eagle, that soars high above the earth, and gazes on the meridian sun, the calf or ox has its eye fixed downward on the earth, while it patiently submits its neck to the yoke of labour, and ploughs the ground for the husbandman, or treads out the corn in the threshing-floor. The spiritual character, thus implied, is laborious diligence in present, immediate duty, a readiness to stoop to all the details of earthly life, and a dominion over external nature; without the memories that belong to the distant past, or anticipations of the remote future, or a penetrating glance into the loftier mysteries of heavenly truth.

The second gospel, if this emblem describes its character, will be a gospel of the personal ministry of Jesus, in the days of his humiliation. It will abound in the details of his works of love, of his active and outward life, with few references to ancient prophecy, or deep utterances of human sympathy, or express revelations of His higher glory, as the eternal Son of God. It will be a practical, homely, earnest gospel, full of action rather than of discourse, of minute and graphic history, rather than of brief and comprehensive statements. It will set before us the character of the Lord Jesus in His dominion over outward nature,

and the unwearied activity of His daily ministry here below. This spiritual character, also, agrees well with its historical adaptation to Roman converts. For the emblem of the fourth empire is iron, the metal of practical, working men. The Roman mind dwelt little on the shadowy memories of the past, or anticipations of the distant future, or on lofty speculations respecting the higher mysteries of our being. In the sphere of outward activity alone, their power was immense, and has every where left enduring monuments of its greatness. It remains to inquire how far the spiritual features, implied in this cherubic symbol, are actually revealed in St. Mark's narrative.

I. And first, the gospel of St. Mark, compared with that of St. Matthew, is distinguished by its sparing introduction of our Lord's discourses, and a more copious description of his various miracles. In the one, we have thirteen chapters, almost entirely composed of the sayings of Jesus; in the other, scarcely three such chapters are found. If the account of our Lord's infancy, and the longer discourses were removed, the first gospel would become considerably shorter than the second, instead of greatly exceeding it in size. Even those discourses, which St. Mark has retained, are compressed into one half of their length, as given in the earlier gospel. This remarkable contrast agrees with the spiritual purpose, which has been just ascribed to the second narrative, as a revelation of the Lord Jesus in his dominion over nature, and in the outward, practical activity of his works of love.

II. Again, the opening of the second gospel has a very distinct and peculiar character. It neither dwells on the pre-existent glory of the Word, like the fourth gospel, nor on the records of the infancy of Jesus, like those of St. Matthew and St. Luke, but enters at once on the public ministry of John, his herald and forerunner, and passes on rapidly, after a few verses, to the account of his own public preaching and labours. Its commencement is abrupt, and carries us at once into the midst of the busy scene of his appointed ministry. "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God: As it is written in the prophets,

Behold I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight." The prediction, first quoted, describes our Lord as the messenger of the covenant, or the Prophet by whom God was pleased to reveal His will to mankind. The Evangelist then hastens on to his main subject, and from the fourteenth verse enters at once on the labours of our Lord, in the active and earnest proclamation of the kingdom of God.

III. A characteristic feature of this gospel, from the first, is the use of terms, denoting continued action. Thus in the very first verse of direct history, the title of John, in Matthew, is transformed into a description of his daily employment. "John was baptizing in the wilderness, and preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." The same form recurs, i. 6, 10, 14, 21, 22, 39; ii. 2, 13, 18; iii. 12, 13; iv. 2, 33; vi. 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 34, 56, and is thus a peculiar feature of this gospel, which gives a fuller tone to the whole narrative.

Another character, which has been often noticed, is the use of the word, *εὐθεως*, which occurs here twenty-seven times, eight times in St. Matthew, and twice only in St. Luke. Its frequency, which seems to detract a little from the elegance of the style, gives a peculiar tone of swiftness and incessant activity to the whole narrative. We pass continually from one incident to another, from the petition of the suppliant, to the work of mercy that followed; from the return of Jesus, to the thronging of the multitudes; from the secret thought in the heart of his enemies, to the prompt and speedy reply; from the utterance of his words of power, to their instant efficacy. We are thus carried on in a perpetual current of living, energetic labour. Procrastination is entirely banished from the picture, here exhibited to us, of the person and ministry of the Son of God.

IV. Again, the gospel of St. Mark abounds, above all the rest, with graphical and expressive details, which bring before our eyes the very picture of the scene he describes. Thus in i. 7,

he adds the brief epithet, "the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy, *stooping down*, to unloose." The general expression, "the heavens were opened," is replaced by another still more vivid—"he saw the heavens rent asunder (*σχίζομενους*). In the brief account of the temptation we find a new fact, which gives a vivid reality to the whole scene—"He was with the wild beasts ; and the angels ministered unto him." In the call of James and John, it is stated that Jesus had gone *a little further*—"and they left their father Zebedee in the ship, *with the hired servants*, and followed him." The dispossession at Capernaum is not reported at all by St. Matthew, and when compared with the third gospel, we find an additional incident, both striking and impressive ; that, "*when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice*, he came out of him." In the next passage, the house is mentioned, as that of Simon *and Andrew*, and they entered it, *with James and John*. The eventide is more clearly defined by the actual sun-setting (*ἔτε ἐδύ ὁ ἥλιος*), and the graphic account of the cures is given, that "all the city was *gathered together at the door*." The departure of Jesus, and the search of his disciples, are very minutely described—"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed. And Simon, and they that were with him, followed after him." In the cure of the leper, the account is rendered more vivid by the description of his kneeling down to Jesus, and by the brief addition, "Jesus, *moved with compassion*, put forth his hand, and touched him." The charge to the leper, which follows, and the effects of his report, are given with equal minuteness of colouring. All these touches of vivid reality are found in the first chapter only, and they are equally numerous and striking in the rest of the gospel. They are especially conspicuous in the voyage to Gadara, the cure of the demoniac, of the woman with the issue, and the raising of the daughter of Jairus, and in the later dispossession, which follows the account of the Transfiguration.

V. Another feature of St. Mark's gospel is the introduction of

phrases and names, which give a dramatic reality and vividness to the narrative. Thus, in the call of Matthew, ii. 14, he describes him doubly, by his Jewish name, and the name of his father. "He saw *Levi, the son of Alphaeus*, sitting at the receipt of custom." In our Lord's quotation, with regard to David's conduct ii. 26, the brief circumstance is added, that it was *in the days of Abiathar the high-priest*. In the plots of the enemies of Jesus iii. 6, *the Herodians* are mentioned along with the Pharisees. The multitudes, who then followed Jesus, are noted by the places from which they came, Galilee, Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, Perca, Tyre and Sidon, iii. 7, 8. In the list of the twelve Apostles, he alone gives the surname, *Boanerges*, of the two sons of Zebedee. In the account of the storm, he gives the very words of Jesus, *Peace, be still*, iv. 39. He mentions the district, in which the dispossessed of Gadara published his cure. "He began to publish *in Decapolis*, how great things Jesus had done for him." He gives the name of the ruler, *Jairus*, whose daughter was raised, v. 22, and the very words of Jesus, *Talitha Cumi*, by which the resurrection of the child was effected, ver. 41. After the miracle of the loaves, he specifies that the disciples were sent over before unto *Bethsaida*. He reports, once again, the Syriac term, *Ephphatha*, used in the cure of the deaf man in Decapolis, vii. 34. In the request of the sons of Zebedee, he twice repeats the names, omitted in St. Matthew, and gives the name and parentage of the blind man at Jericho, *Bartimeus*, the son of Timeus, and introduces the Syriac term, *Rabboni*, in his reply to Jesus. He alone mentions the four disciples, Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, whose inquiry led to the prophecy on the Mount of Olives. In like manner he alone records of Simon the Cyrenian, that he was the father of Alexander and Rufus, and first mentions the name of the wife of Zebedee, *Salome*. All these particulars give to his narrative a peculiar air of intimate knowledge and truthful reality.

VI. This gospel abounds, also, in allusions to the external gestures and deportment of Jesus. In the cure of Simon's wife's

mother, "he took her by the hand, and lifted her up," a detail not so fully given by St. Matthew. In the cure of the withered hand, "he looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." Soon after, we have the graphic description—"He spake to the disciples, that a small ship should wait upon him, because of the multitude, lest they should throng him; for he had healed many, so that they pressed on him for to touch him, as many as had plagues." Another picture of the same kind presently follows—"He goeth up into the mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would, and they came to him." Again, on the visit of his mother and brethren, we are told that "he looked round about on them that sat about him," before his expressive reply. Before the voyage we have the significant detail, that "they took him, even as he was, in the ship; and there were also with him other little ships," and when the storm arose, "he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep upon the seat cover." In the cure of the issue, we have the statement, "He looked round about, to see her that had done this thing." The mode in which the cures were wrought at Nazareth is also described—"He laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them." In the miracle in Decapolis, when the deaf man was healed, "he put his fingers in his ears, and spat, and touched his tongue, and looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith to him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened." When the Pharisees require a sign, we are told that "he sighed deeply in his spirit." Before his public rebuke of Peter, "he turned about and looked upon his disciples," and afterwards "called the people to him, with his disciples also," before he gives the further admonition. The description of his Transfiguration is in homely, but most vivid phrases. "His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow, so as no fuller on earth could white them." A lingering glory on his countenance is implied, on his descent from the mountain. "All the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him, saluted him." Even in the cure of the child, the descriptive addition

appears—"But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up, and he arose." And again, in the dispute about precedence, we find it mentioned, here only, that "when he was in the house," before he was seated, "he asked them what they disputed upon in the way;" that he then "sat down and called the twelve" to him; and that he not only "took a child and set him in the midst," as the other Evangelist also tells us, but also "took him in his arms," before his touching and grave appeal to the Apostles. The same striking detail is repeated, x. 16, on a similar occasion, when he blessed the little children. "He took them up in his arms, and put his hand upon them." When the young ruler went away sorrowful, again "Jesus looked round about on his disciples," before he drew for them that instructive and awakening lesson, on the danger of earthly riches. Another graphical description soon follows, which is also found here only. "They were in the way going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus went before them, and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid." In the entry into the city, we have the description more minutely given than elsewhere. "They that *went before*, and they that *followed*, cried, saying, Hosanna;" and it is noted here only that Jesus, on his first entrance into the temple, "looked round about upon all things." It is mentioned, also, that "he was *walking in the temple*," when the chief priests questioned him respecting his authority; while the incident of the widow's mite is given with similar minuteness of description. There is thus no gospel which gives such ample materials for a picture of the daily, outward life of the Lord Jesus.

VII. There are two miracles of our Lord which are related in this gospel only, and these are both marked by the same character, of graphic and minute detail.

vii. 32. "And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech, and beseech him to put his hand on him. And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers in his ears, and he spit and touched his tongue. And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him,

Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And immediately his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. And he charged them that they should tell no man; but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it, and were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well, he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."

viii. 22. "And he cometh to Bethsaida, and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him. And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town, and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up; and he was restored and saw every man clearly."

The former of these answers in position to Matt. xv. 29—31, where a number of miracles are grouped together in one general statement; and shews in a striking manner, by contrast, the individualizing and graphical character of the second gospel, and the patient and laborious detail of our Lord's daily ministry. The other belongs to an interval, of which no incident is given in the other gospels, a short journey from the lake of Tiberias to the north-eastern part of Galilee; and, besides its own pictorial character, serves to link together the geographical relations of the previous and the following parts of our Saviour's ministry. It stands alone, also, in its picture of a cure effected in two successive stages, and thus rendered more analogous to the ordinary processes of medical restoration. The miracles of Jesus are thus brought into closer contact with the heart, as encouragements to the quiet, sedulous activity of Christian love, and perseverance in seemingly imperfect or unsuccessful labours.

VIII. There are three incidents, again, which are not found in St. Matthew, but which are common to St. Mark and St. Luke; the dispossession in Capernaum, the question of John, and the widow's mite. Mark i. 21—29; ix. 38—50; xii.

41—44. The first of these, besides its power of description in itself, connects the call of the apostles with the cure of Simon's mother-in-law, and thus gives a deeper tone of historical reality to the whole course of events at the opening of our Lord's ministry, which is still further increased by the account which follows, of the retirement of Jesus the next morning. Mark i. 35. The second is the only instance, in the three first gospels, of a conversation in which any other disciple but Peter is introduced by name, and thus serves to temper the prominence of that apostle in the first gospel; which is still further done, by omitting the promise after his confession, his walking on the water, and the incident of the tribute money. The third is peculiarly suited to explain the simple and natural character of our Lord's teaching, and its growth out of passing incidents, as they arose.

IX. The close of the gospel has the same distinctive features, which have been traced throughout its whole course. The visit of the women to the sepulchre, compared with St. Matthew, has a greater minuteness of detail, and, without the same air of royal majesty, has a remarkable tone of reality, and of accurate and careful knowledge. The mention of Salome along with the two Maries, the purpose for which they came, their preparation of spices after the Sabbath was past, the early hour at which they set out to the tomb, their questioning among themselves about the removal of the stone, their unexpected discovery that it was rolled away, their entrance into the sepulchre, the position and vesture of the angel, their sudden fear, and his encouraging answer, their unabated alarm, which makes them flee from the sepulchre, and unfits them, for a time, to communicate the message; are all features of the narrative, which correspond exactly to the spiritual purpose of the whole gospel, and complete the visible picture of our Lord's ministry, from his abode with wild beasts in the wilderness to the hour when angels once again minister to their risen Lord.

The brief summary, which follows, though more comprehen-

sive, retains still the same characteristic attention to external details, and the individual acts of our Lord's ministry. Instead of one main, and one subordinate appearance, as in St. Matthew and St. Luke, we have here three in distinct succession. The first is to Mary Magdalene alone, who is described by the cure she has already received, and it is connected with the only express statement of the exact time of the resurrection. It is followed by a graphic description of the weeping disciples, and of their incredulity when she brings her startling message. The second appearance is mentioned, with its main characteristics, that the two disciples were walking from Jerusalem into the country, and that Jesus appeared to them in another form. We have then the appearance to the apostles the same evening, and the circumstance is added that they were reclining at their evening meal, and that Jesus rebuked them gravely for their previous unbelief.

The commission, which closes the whole gospel, has the same features, of our Lord's dominion over external nature, and his character as the persevering Teacher and Prophet, stamped upon it with great clearness. The very phrase used for the objects of the gospel message, compared with St. Matthew, is very significant. In the first gospel, the command is to teach "all the nations," and men are thus viewed in their national and political character, as the subjects of Messiah's kingly sceptre. Here the charge is given, "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Man is thus identified with all the lower creation, and all are inclusively regarded as the objects of the Divine message. The external signs are then given, which would attest the new revelation, and prove the subjection of all nature to the authority of its Lord. And last of all, even after the ascension of Jesus, he is still described by this double character—the Ruler over all lower creatures, and the constant and unwearied fellow-worker with his own servants in their daily ministry of love. "So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand

of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, THE LORD WORKING WITH THEM, AND CONFIRMING THE WORD BY SIGNS FOLLOWING. AMEN.” As the first gospel closed with a sublime proclamation of his regal sovereignty, to whom all power is given in heaven and earth, the gospel of St. Mark exhibits here, with equal prominence, the unwearied and powerful energy of the Lord Jesus, in the perpetual diffusion of Divine truth, and in all those various works of spiritual husbandry, which shall issue at length in a precious harvest of immortal souls.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE SPIRITUAL CHARACTER ON ST. LUKE'S GOSPEL.

THE third gospel, if it corresponds to the spiritual meaning of the third cherubic symbol, with the face of a man, will exhibit our Lord in his human sympathy, benevolence, and compassion. It will present him to the church as the true High-priest, who was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. The message of heaven will assume its most attractive and winning aspect, as one of grace to sinners, and the human love of Jesus will be peculiarly displayed in the whole history.

This gospel, like that of St. Matthew, begins with the infancy of Jesus. Yet even here there is a striking contrast. Instead of his royal genealogy, through the line of Jewish kings, it begins with the message of an angel to Zacharias, a priest of the course of Abia, whose wife Elisabeth was of the daughters of Aaron. The scene opens amidst the sacred services of the Jewish temple, and Gabriel appears to Zacharias, while he fulfils his lot in the order of his course, at the right side of the golden incense-altar. The message of Divine mercy, which opens the whole history, is given in answer to the united worship of the people of God. We are reminded, from the first, how the Jewish priesthood, in the person of Zacharias, and the service of the temple, were to lose themselves, like stars in the morning sunlight, in the higher and everlasting priesthood of the Son of God.

Again, the Incarnation is here revealed in connexion with the Virgin mother of Jesus, from whom alone his true manhood was derived, and by whom he was made the heir of all human sympathies and sorrows. In St. Matthew his reputed father, Joseph, is the more conspicuous, by whom he inherited the royal honours of the kings of Judah. The judicial righteousness is conspicuous in St. Matthew, by which the natural suspicions of Joseph were cleared away, and the innocence of Mary established; while St. Luke exhibits the tenderness of Divine grace in the angelic salutation—"Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women."

Another striking feature, in these early chapters, is the repeated songs of praise. The worship of God is the main work of the priestly office, and the distinctive honour of man. In this gospel alone these utterances of praise abound. The song of Elisabeth is followed by that of Mary, and this again by the hymn of Zacharias, the worship of the angels at Bethlehem, and the song of the aged Simeon. From first to last, the same tone is maintained. This gospel, above the others, resounds everywhere with voices of praise and thanksgiving.

It is plain, again, in this first chapter, how we are introduced into the quiet scenes and changes of domestic life. We have the father and mother of the Baptist, the Virgin Mary, the relations and kinsfolk, the deliberations on the name of the infant, the joy and wonder of his parents and friends, when the dumbness of Zacharias was removed, all set vividly before us. We are taught, from the first, how truly Jesus became one of ourselves, and are ushered into the homes of his childhood, and quiet scenes of domestic love.

The account of the Nativity, chapter ii., has the very same character. It reveals to us One who was in all points made like unto his brethren. It shews us that the Son of Man, even at his birth, entered on his deep humiliation, and had not where to lay his head. It exhibits the Holy Child, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in the manger, the visit of the shepherds, men

of low degree, and not eastern sages or kings, and the humbling rites of circumcision, and purification with the sin-offering in the temple for the infant Saviour. It tells us how the aged Simeon took the infant in his arms, while he blessed God for His mercy to His people, and that "the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was with him." It mentions the visit to the Passover, at twelve years of age, the anxiety of his mother for the young child, and his willing subjection to his reputed parents. All these things reveal to us, in a striking manner, the condescension of the Lord, and how truly He stooped in all respects to our low estate; while the whole is crowned by the sentence at the close, so expressive of his true humanity. "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."

The ministry of the Baptist is introduced, in this gospel, with several characteristic features. It is defined in the date of its commencement, by the Jewish high-priests, and by the character of John himself, as a Jewish priest, the son of Zacharias, whose temple-service and vision have been recorded before. The prophecy of Isaiah is more fully quoted, so as to close with the anticipation of the gospel's universal triumph. "All flesh shall see the salvation of God." The stern warning, common to St. Matthew, is mitigated by the instructions given here to each class of inquirers, which are a simple earnest of the grace of the gospel, in its application to the common duties of daily life. In the baptism of our Lord, we find here only the significant addition, that Jesus was praying, when the heavens were opened, and the Spirit of God, in answer to his own prayer, descended upon him. The genealogy then follows, which external and internal evidence proves to be that which ascends through Mary, his real mother. Instead of closing with Abraham, the forefather of the Jews, it mounts up to Adam, the forefather of the whole human race; and thus reminds us that Jesus is really the brother of all men, and the promised Redeemer of the whole family of mankind.

In the temptation of our Lord, when compared with the account in St. Matthew, the priestly character of St. Luke's gospel is again apparent. The climax is found, not in the offer of all the kingdoms of the world, but when our Lord is brought to Jerusalem, and set there on the pinnacle of the temple, while the words at the close allude to the renewal of the spiritual conflict in the last agony and sufferings of the Redeemer. "And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him for a season." The words contain an expressive intimation of the Saviour's personal experience, as our High-priest, who was tempted in all points like unto his brethren, only without sin.

The opening of his public ministry, in this gospel, is rich with human elements of compassion and grace. We are introduced at once to Nazareth, the home of his infancy, and see him, according to his custom in previous years of quiet retirement, frequenting the synagogue on the Sabbath-day. Instead of the brief and solemn warning, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," we have a gentler and more attractive message. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." This is not the stern voice of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, denouncing speedy judgment on the impenitent; or of the righteous Lawgiver, enforcing the claims of Divine holiness, as in the Sermon on the Mount; but reveals all the human sympathies of Jesus, in their tenderest utterances of compassion to the sinful and wretched. And hence we are told that "all bare him record, and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his lips."

In the rest of the narrative the same tone of thought and feeling is maintained. The title by which he virtually introduces himself to the men of Nazareth is, the Great Physician. The reference to the prophets illustrates the wide purpose of the

gospel, as a message of grace to all mankind, and not to the Jews alone. The mercy shewn to the widow of Sarepta, and the cure of Naaman the Syrian, are turned into presentiments of the mercy now about to visit the whole Gentile world. Even the quiet withdrawal from the fury of the Nazarenes exhibits, in a striking manner, the gentleness and Divine compassion of Jesus, who was willing to be despised and rejected of men, on account of the very grace and mercy which should have endeared him to their hearts.

The history of the miraculous draught, when compared with the brief account of the call of the disciples in the two other gospels, reveals the same distinctive character. There we are struck simply with the authority of Jesus, whose word of command was followed by prompt obedience. Here, on the other hand, the features of condescension and grace, and human sympathy, are most conspicuous. He is not walking alone by the sea, but the people are pressing upon him to hear the word of God. He asks a favour of his own disciple, to thrust out a little from the land, that he may teach the people with more ease from the ship. He then repays the kindness by the instruction, "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught." When the immense capture is made, no command is given to abandon their prize. The Saviour waits till his disciple falls down at his feet, in awe and wonder, and exclaims—"Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." The answer then comes, not as before, in a command of Divine authority, but simply in a gracious encouragement, and attended with the promise of a higher blessing. "Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men." The miracle itself revealed his Divine power, but all the circumstances are full of human grace and tenderness, by which the trembling and astonished sinner is invited to regard the Lord of glory as his own bosom friend. There is thus also a farther token that the events are distinct and successive. The Saviour first summons the disciples with kingly authority, and they yield him a prompt obedience. He afterwards allures them

by a bright exhibition of his power and grace ; and, without any word of command, they are drawn to him, more powerfully than ever, by the cords of human sympathy and of grateful love.

Another striking feature, which runs through the whole gospel, is the view of our Lord himself as a worshipper. One instance, at his baptism, has been already noticed. After the cure of the leper, which follows the miraculous draught, we are told that "he withdrew into desert places, and prayed." The words, in the original, imply that this was his habitual practice, and do not refer to one single occasion alone. After the cure of the withered hand, and before the ordination of the Twelve Apostles, "he went out into the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." The remarkable confession of Peter is given in all the three gospels, but only St. Luke tells us that Jesus was "alone praying," before he put the inquiry to his disciples, which occasioned Peter's reply. They all recount the transfiguration ; but only St. Luke informs us, that Jesus went up into the mountain to PRAY, before the vision of his glory. We are told, again, that he was praying in a certain place, when his disciples made the request—"Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." How different the tone of human gentleness and condescension, by which the prayer is thus introduced, from the royal dignity of the charge which precedes and follows it in the sermon in St. Matthew ! The stress, in one case, is laid on the righteousness of God, who will deny forgiveness to the unmerciful ; and in the other, on the prevailing power of earnest and importunate supplication. A distinct parable is afterwards given, in St. Luke's gospel only, to enforce the privilege of unwearied prayer, and another, to shew the peculiar efficacy of such prayer from the contrite and broken-hearted sinner. The prayer of our Lord himself in Gethsemane is more fully recorded, with the touching addition—"And being in an agony, he prayed the more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood, falling down to the ground." Even on the cross, three out of seven sayings of our Lord are given in

this gospel, and two of these are prayers, while the third is a most gracious promise, in answer to the prayer of a penitent—"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." From first to last the gospel reveals to us that blessed High-priest, "who in the days of his flesh offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, and was heard in that he feared."

St. Luke, again, as the physician, presents in strong relief the healing power of the Saviour, not only by the title of Physician, in the first opening of his ministry at Nazareth, but in repeated allusions to the healing virtue which flowed from his body. Thus we read, vi. 17, that "the whole multitude sought to touch him, for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all." And again, in the cure of the woman with the issue, we have the reply to his disciples—"Some one hath touched me, for I perceive that virtue has gone out from me." The works of healing are thus exhibited, not so much in the aspect of free and sovereign benefits, bestowed at pleasure, but as a spontaneous effluence from the fulness of his grace.

The character of human sympathy in this gospel is further marked by the prominent mention of women, and especially of widows. Thus, from the very first, we are introduced to Elisabeth, the wife of Zacharias, of the daughters of Aaron, and to the virgin mother of Jesus. At the presentation, we have not only the song of the aged Simeon, but a response from Anna the prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, "a widow of fourscore and four years, who departed not from the temple, but served God with fasting and prayers night and day." The first discourse of our Lord, in this gospel, makes honourable mention of the widow of Sarepta, to whom Elias was sent in the time of famine. Here alone the touching incident is recorded of the widow of Nain, whose only son was carried out for burial, when "the Lord saw her, and had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not," and after the miraculous resurrection of the

young man, "delivered him to his mother." Here too we have the description of the "woman that was a sinner," her contrition and faith, her deep love to Jesus, and the gracious answer which she received. In the circuit of Galilee that followed, we are told that the Twelve were with him, and the narrative then continues—"And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary, called Magdalene, out of whom had gone seven devils, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, who ministered to him of their substance." This striking feature in our Lord's history, his dependence for support on the charity of female disciples, so expressive of his tender sympathy and deep condescension, is found recorded in this gospel alone. Here also we are first introduced to the beloved sisters, Martha and Mary, who receive Jesus into their house on his journey. We have a miracle of healing on the woman who had an infirmity, and the parable of the unjust judge and importunate widow. We have mention, at the crucifixion, of the women who wept and bewailed him, and the touching answer of Jesus—"Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children." Last, of all, we have here the fullest report of the visit to the sepulchre, by the larger company of women, who had followed our Lord from Galilee to Jerusalem. The same feature appears in the book of Acts, which opens with the description of the first apostolic company. "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, WITH THE WOMEN, AND MARY THE MOTHER OF JESUS, and with his brethren."

The parables, in St. Luke's gospel, have a domestic character, and a peculiar gentleness of tone. In the Good Samaritan, we find sectarian jealousy, and priestly selfishness, set in full contrast with the claims of universal brotherhood. The efficacy of prayer is enforced by a domestic picture, of a friend who applies at midnight for the gift of three loaves, because another friend has arrived unexpectedly to be his guest. The rich man, whose ground brought forth plentifully, offers another picture of daily

life. The parable of the mustard-seed receives here a more familiar turn, by the scene being transferred to the garden, instead of the field. The parables of the woman who hides the leaven in three measures of meal, of the householder who rises and shuts the door; of the wedding, and the choice of the highest seat; of the man who made a supper, and the excuses of the guests; of the shepherd, the housewife, the prodigal, and the steward, have all the same quiet and domestic tone. There is a gentle and familiar grace, which distinguishes them from those of the first gospel, and renders them a peculiarly rich unfolding of the compassion and human condescension of the Lord Jesus.

It is another peculiarity of this gospel, that our Lord is more plainly set before us in his social intercourse with all classes of men. The feast in the publican's house is more fully described than in the other gospels. The invitation of the Pharisee, when he went in and sat down to meat, and the woman anointed his feet with ointment; the preparation for him in a Samaritan village; his entertainment by Martha in her own house, and her care about much serving; the second invitation by a Pharisee, when those severe warnings against hypocrisy were uttered; his meal in the house of one of the chief Pharisees on the Sabbath-day; his stay in the house of Zaccheus, and the evening sojourn with the disciples at Emmaus after the resurrection, are all found in this gospel alone. Here only the important fact is clearly described, that Jesus ate and drank with his disciples after he rose from the dead. Our Lord is thus exhibited, throughout, with all the characteristic features of real and sympathizing humanity.

The close of this third gospel remarkably agrees with the view of its special purpose, which has been deduced from such various and concurrent tokens. Instead of the words of royal authority, which form the parting commission of the Lord in St. Matthew, and the unwearied activity of the risen Saviour, in confirming the gospel by outward signs, and by the ministry of all nature, which

forms the last message in St. Mark's narrative, we have his gracious instruction, "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations," with a special charge to the apostles to begin at Jerusalem, the very scene of his own rejection and bitter sufferings. After this parting message of grace to all mankind, the High Priest reveals himself to his disciples in the very moment when he is taken up from them into heaven. "And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." The gospel then closes, as it began, with solemn acts of praise and thanksgiving in the temple. "And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen."

The third gospel, then, maintains throughout a spiritual unity. It exhibits our Lord to the view of his Church, not so much in his royal dignity, as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the dispenser of righteous judgment, nor as the patient labourer in the spiritual vineyard, controlling all nature by his miracles, and unwearied in his mighty works of love; but as the SON OF MAN, full of all human sympathies; the true High-priest, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, in whom all the rites of the law and the services of the Jewish temple found their true consummation; who was anointed by the Spirit to preach the gospel to the poor, and to heal the broken-hearted, and to bring a message of forgiving grace, and deep, heavenly compassion, to all the mourners of mankind. The living creature, having the face of a man, is a true emblem of the spiritual character which marks the whole narrative. And hence this gospel of St. Luke, as missionaries have constantly found, is preeminently suited to reach the consciences, and touch the hearts of men, in the most remote and various tribes of the great human family.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE TRUTH AND DIVINITY OF ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL.

THE gospel of St. John is distinguished from the three others, both in its historical evidence, and its spiritual character. Its authority, as a faithful narrative, does not depend on the early date of its composition, but on the well-attested fact that its writer was one of the twelve Apostles, the bosom-friend of the Lord Jesus. It was written, according to Irenæus, near the close of St. John's life, about the time of his return from Patmos, or very near the end of the first century, and has always been received in the church as the undoubted work of that beloved disciple. In modern times, one of the few opponents of its genuineness, after the question had been fully discussed, revoked his own doubts, and submitted to the force of the historical evidence. It was, again, a usual tradition in the time of Chrysostom, that the purpose of the writer was to unfold the doctrine of our Lord's true Divinity, since the other gospels had dwelt rather on his assumption of humanity, and had made Christ known after the flesh. It was sometimes called, by way of contrast, the gospel after the spirit. The fourth cherubic symbol, of the flying eagle, was constantly applied to the Evangelist, because his gospel is marked so clearly, above the rest, by a tone of lofty contemplation, and a direct unveiling of the hidden glory of the Son of God.

But this very excellence of the fourth gospel, which has endeared its message, in every age, to the Christian believer,

would seem, at first sight, to lay it more open than the rest to doubts and suspicions from the disciples of modern philosophy. A gospel, of which it was the distinct purpose to unfold the Divine glory of the Lord Jesus, and which was written nearly seventy years after his death, may seem, to sceptical eyes, far removed from the ground of sober and solid history into the region of romantic fiction and legendary dreams. And such charges have actually been brought, by some recent critics, against the fourth gospel. The discourses, we are told, are free compositions of the writer. Their gradual transitions, rendered obscure by the mystical depths of meaning in which they lie, transitions in which one thought is developed from another, indicate a pliable, unresisting mass, that proceeds from the store of the writer's own thoughts, and is moulded by his own will. And hence it is less important to unfold the spiritual character of the gospel, which has been proverbial in every age of the church, and must impress every thoughtful reader, than to trace the Divine wisdom, which, even in this fuller and higher exhibition of the glory of Christ, and in the latest gospel, designed rather to supplement than to confirm the others, has given us abundant pledges of the authenticity and historical reality of the whole narrative. Some of these proofs lie on the surface, but others require for their discovery a close and searching examination.

Let us first consider the internal evidence for the Apostolic authorship of the gospel. The writer, like the other evangelists, has nowhere openly mentioned his own name. This feature of modesty belongs to all these messengers of that blessed Saviour, who was meek and lowly in heart, and of whom it was prophesied, "He shall not strive, nor cry, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets." Yet, as a closer search reveals the name of the three other evangelists, or at least of two of them, by clear and certain inference from their writings, so St. John discovers himself, by indirect, but conclusive evidence, to be the writer of the fourth gospel.

In the last chapter we have a beautiful narrative of an appear-

ance of Jesus to seven disciples by the sea of Galilee. There were present, we are told, Simon Peter, Thomas called Didymus, Nathanael of Cana of Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others. The disciple whom Jesus loved was one of these, and tells us at the close that it is he "which testifieth these things, and wrote these things." He is marked here, and also in the previous chapter, by his special intimacy with Peter. They alone ran together to the sepulchre, and it was this disciple who said to Peter, upon the draught of the fishes, "It is the Lord;" while St. Peter, after his own death has been announced, inquires with regard to this companion alone, "Lord, and what shall this man do?" It is thus clear that the disciple represents himself as Simon Peter's most intimate companion and chosen friend.

Now in the earlier gospels we find that Peter, James, and John, were singled out by our Lord repeatedly for peculiar favour. Still further, we read in St. Luke that Peter and John were the two disciples selected by our Lord as his messengers, to prepare the Paschal supper; while, in the Book of Acts, Peter and John went up together to the temple, when the lame man was healed, were imprisoned together by the Sanhedrim, and bore witness to them of Jesus, and reported to their own company the threatenings of the priests. Soon after, it is Peter and John who are sent down together, to confirm the believers in Samaria. And since the sons of Zebedee are expressly stated to have been present at the appearance of Jesus by the sea of Tiberias, the inference is clear and certain, that St. John is the disciple whom Jesus loved, the companion and friend of Peter, and thus indirectly announces himself to be the writer of the gospel.

Another proof, still more delicate, is found near the opening. We are there told that, after the testimony of the Baptist, "Behold the Lamb of God," two of the disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. The minute description that follows is a proof that one of them was the writer of the gospel, and thus an eye-witness of the scene he describes. "Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye?"

They said unto him, Rabbi, which is, being interpreted, Master, where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day. It was about the tenth hour." The writer thus, in his old age, delights to revive the impressions of the moment which first brought him to the presence of Jesus.

One of these two disciples, we read in the next verse, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. The other, who must have been himself, the writer, does not give his own name. Yet it is discovered, in passing, by the words that follow, where it is said of Andrew, "He first (*ὁ ἄρκτος πρῶτος*) findeth his own brother Simon, and brought him to Jesus." It is thus implied that the other disciple too had an own brother, whom he brought to Jesus, as Andrew had done a little before. And hence it is plain that this disciple was one of the two sons of Zebedee, and not less plain that it was John, the younger brother, who alone survived even fifteen years after the death of Jesus.

In the account of the crucifixion we have a further proof, of the same indirect kind. For we there read that this disciple whom Jesus loved, and Simon Peter, went in to the palace of the high-priest, to whom the former of them was previously known. Now in the book of Acts, only a few weeks later, when Peter and John are brought before the Sanhedrim, the high priest Annas and his companions "recognize them, that they had been with Jesus." There is every reason to suppose that the allusion is to the time, which would be fresh in their memory, when the disciple, who was known to the high-priest, had introduced Peter to the hall during the eventful trial. And thus again it results that St. John was the writer of the gospel. And indeed, since the author, if we exclude the supposition of forgery and wicked artifice, must have been one of the twelve, the choice is narrowed by this one fact alone. It could not be Simon, or Andrew, or Philip, or Nathanael, or Thomas, or Judas, brother of James, all of whom are here mentioned expressly by name, nor yet St. Matthew, the writer of the first gospel. The two

sons of Zebedee, and Simon Zelotes, are the only possible candidates for the honour. But James, the son of Zebedee, was martyred long before the gospel was written, and Simon Zelotes answers none of the conditions, which are all satisfied by John, the brother of James.

The writer, then, if honest and sincere, and not a conscious deceiver, must have been the beloved disciple, St. John, who was one of the earliest in his call at the first, and leaned at the last Supper on the bosom of the Lord. Now the gospel, amidst all its glorious exhibitions of heavenly truth, abounds in those delicate touches, which vouch for its truthfulness, and prove that the writer was indeed an eye-witness of the facts he records. How truthful, for instance, is the question of the two disciples, when Jesus had turned, and saw them following—Rabbi, (that is, Master,) where dwellest thou? How minute and familiar the reason for their stay with Jesus. “It was about the tenth hour.” How simple and expressive the interview of Jesus with Nathanael, when the writer seems also to have been present—the change from sceptical doubt to wondering inquiry, and from wonder to hearty and childlike faith! How exact the notice, and yet how natural, in the marriage at Cana. “There were set there six water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three measures apiece.” How vivid the description of the whole scene! “They filled them up to the brim.” “The governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and said unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine, and when men have well drunk, that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine until now.” In the cleansing of the temple, how distinct every part of the whole transaction, the expulsion of the cattle, the overthrow of the tables of the money-changers, and the rebuke in words to those, in whom the profanation was less glaring and offensive! “And he said to them that sold doves. Take these things hence; make not my father's house a house of merchandize.” In the next chapter, how simple and real the notice that is given in passing, “John also

was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there," and the account which follows of the strife between John's disciples and a Jew, that is apparently, a Pharisee, which occasioned the parting testimony of the Baptist to Jesus.

The history of the woman of Samaria abounds equally in these delicate touches of historical truth. The weariness of Jesus with his journey; the time, the sixth hour of the day; the posture, he sat upon the well; the place, the well which continues to this hour, and has been lately visited by Christian travellers; the remark of the woman—"Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep;" the mention of her five husbands, and her actual adultery or concubinage; the mingled evasion and confession—"Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet:" the surprise of the disciples on their return, because the Jews had no dealings with Samaritans; the haste of the woman in leaving her water-pot, that she may announce more quickly the presence of this wonderful stranger; the entreaty of the disciples, and the answer of Jesus—"I have meat to eat that ye know not of," with their perplexity, while yet unused to his deep, spiritual sayings—"Hath any man brought him aught to eat?" and the length of the stay, for two days, before he pursued his journey;—these are all so many tokens, in the words of the Evangelist himself, that one who saw the scene has borne record, and that his record is true. Equally minute in its historical fidelity is the reply of the servants to the nobleman, when he inquired the hour at which his son began to amend—"Yesterday, at the seventh hour, the fever left him."

The miracle at the pool of Bethesda has the same features of intimate and personal knowledge on the part of the Evangelist. The description of its site, by the sheep-gate, and of its structure, "having five porches," the thirty-eight years during which the infirmity had lasted, the religious scruples of the Jews, the retirement of Jesus from the throng of people, the later interview in the temple, and the persevering malice of the Jews, are all pourtrayed with a simplicity, that vouches for the truth of

the narrative, and forms a beautiful contrast to the depth and fulness of the discourse which presently follows.

The account of the miracle of the loaves is still more striking, for the clear signs of historical reality, which prepare the way for the heavenly discourse in the synagogue of Capernaum. These are the more observable, because this is the only event in our Lord's ministry, before passion-week, which is recorded in all the four gospels. The season of the event is mentioned by this Evangelist only. "The passover, the feast of the Jews, was nigh." The immediate occasion of the miracle is also given, with a fresh particular of the scene. "Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples." In this gospel alone we have separate mention of the other Apostles, besides Peter, James, and John, in their conversation with Jesus or with each other; while here Andrew, Philip, Nathanael, Thomas, and Judas, have all of them one or more of their sayings put on record. In the present passage, Jesus inquires of Philip, "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" His answer, alluded to by St. Mark, without mentioning this Apostle's name, is characteristically minute. "Two hundred penny-worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little." The reason why Philip is thus appealed to comes to light from another passage of this gospel, which says that he was of Bethsaida, and from St. Luke's notice, that the scene of the miracle was "a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida." Again, the notice is doubly minute, both in the name of the speaker, and mention of the boy, and the description of the loaves. "Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley-loaves, and two small fishes, but what are they among so many?" It is a simple and natural statement, which is made in passing, as from an eye-witness, "Now there was much grass in the place: so the men sat down, in number about five thousand." We have then the fresh particulars, unnoticed by the other writers, that Jesus gave orders for the fragments to be preserved; that the multitudes

intended to take him by force, and make him king ; that on this account, as well as for private worship, he retired from them into the mountain ; that they were only twenty-five or thirty furlongs from the land, rowing against a contrary wind, and with a high sea, when Jesus appeared to them ; that they received him into the ship with special joy, and that they were then carried at once and speedily to the opposite shore. Here alone we are told that no other vessel was there in the evening, when the disciples launched, and that other boats from Tiberias came to the spot on the morning of the next day ; that the people lingered, in the hope of finding Jesus still on the eastern side, and that, upon their disappointment, many of them crossed over to Capernaum. The murmuring of the Jews in the synagogue, the withdrawal of many of the disciples, the inquiry put to the twelve Apostles, the prompt reply of Peter, and the solemn allusion to the foreseen treachery of Judas, are all further proofs of that intense reality, which marks the whole narrative, amidst the brightest and fullest blaze of heavenly truth.

When we pass on to the close of the gospel, the same character of minute knowledge, the knowledge of an eye-witness, reveals itself constantly by the most simple and convincing signs. We are thus told that it was six days before the passover, when Jesus came to Bethany ; that Martha served at the supper which was made for him, and that Lazarus was one of the guests. The anointing is then recorded, but with minute and additional features, that the woman was Mary, the sister of Lazarus ; that the feet were anointed, and not the head alone, as mentioned by the others ; that Mary wiped them with her hair, like the woman in Galilee ; and that the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. The complaint is given, with the supposed price of the ointment, as in St. Mark, but the remark is here only assigned to Judas the traitor ; and the reason given for his complaint reveals another minute circumstance, that Judas carried the bag from which purchases were made for our Lord and his apostles. We are told, here only, that many Jews were

present, and that one powerful motive which drew them was the presence of Lazarus ; and that the disciples understood not at first the fulfilment of prophecy, in the ass's colt on which Jesus rode into Jerusalem. The incident respecting the Greeks is most natural, as well as minute, in all its details. They apply to the only apostle who has a purely Greek name. Philip consults Andrew, one of the four leading apostles, yet of whom nothing is said in the other gospels, and they jointly report the application of these Gentiles to Jesus. In the last supper, the whole incident with which it opens, in the washing of the disciples' feet, the warning of the treachery of Judas, the look of wonder and surprise in the disciples, the posture of St. John, the beckoning of Peter, the change of posture, to put the question more privately, the significant reply, the charge to Judas himself, the conjectures of the other disciples, have all an air of faithful and exact narrative, which brings its own convincing evidence of truth to any thoughtful and candid mind. The man must do violence to his own inward convictions, who pretends to disbelieve the actual occurrence of the whole scene. The same remark applies, with equal force, to chapters xviii. xix., with the whole account of the apprehension, trial, and crucifixion of the Lord Jesus. The prostration of the band of soldiers, the name of the high-priest's servant, whose ear was cut off, the charge to Peter, where Jesus alludes to his own prayer in the hour of agony, the fire of coals in the outer hall, the coldness of the night, the question by the kinsman of Malchus, the scruple of the priests about entering the judgment-hall, the Hebrew name of the pavement, where Pilate sat on his tribunal, *Gabbatha*, the hour of the public sentence, the complaint of the priests respecting the title, and the cold reply of the Roman Governor, the seamless coat, and the lots cast for it by the four soldiers who crucified him, the sacred trust of the beloved disciple, the sponge filled with vinegar, and put on hyssop, the breaking of the legs of the thieves, and the reason why Jesus was exempted from this indignity, with the piercing of his side by the spear, are all minute

features in the narrative, which attest its truth, and prove that the writer, as he states himself, was a real eye-witness of the sorrowful scene.

This gospel, again, reveals its historical reality, by the clear light which it throws on the whole chronology. We learn, here only, that a Passover took place between the close of the Temptation, and the return of Jesus to Galilee at the opening of his Galilean ministry; that a Passover was near at hand, when the five thousand were fed in the wilderness; that Jesus visited Jerusalem at the feasts of Tabernacles and of Dedication in the last year of his ministry, and reached Bethany, in his last visit, six days before the Passover, at which he was crucified. And since it may be inferred, even from this gospel alone, and still more by comparison with St. Luke, that the feast, chapter v. 1, was a Passover also, the ministry of Jesus is thus fixed to a period of three full years. Again, the reply of the Jews to our Lord—"forty and six years hath this temple been building," serves as a key, when compared with the history of Herod in Josephus, to the absolute date, and appear to fix A.D. 27 as the time of this first Passover. No gospel supplies so many important data towards the chronology of our Saviour's public ministry.

Again, the harmony with the other gospels, and the historical accuracy of its statements, with regard to the scene of that ministry, is all the more striking, from the indirect manner in which it appears. The three earlier Evangelists, it has been shewn already, describe the ministry of Jesus in Galilee, and barely allude to his occasional visits to Jerusalem, before the last public journey. St. John, on the other hand, with one exception, describes only the ministry in Judea. This fact has a general explanation in the supplementary character of the gospel, But the writer does not leave us without further links, to illustrate the connexion between these occurrences in Judea, and the main body of the gospel history, which had its scene in Galilee. It is in Galilee that he places the home of Jesus, and his first

miracle ; and the latest message to the disciples, which he records, is by the sea of Tiberias. Capernaum, Bethsaida, and Cana, all in Galilee, are noted by him, more distinctly than elsewhere, as the homes of the six leading apostles. When he describes the first visit to Jerusalem, and the ministry in Judea, he expressly notices that John was not yet cast into prison, and shews that the jealous dislike of the Pharisees made our Lord, soon after, transfer himself to Galilee. Having filled up the interval from the close of the temptation, through the first Passover, to this return from Judea to Cana, he suspends his task as historian, and ceases where the others have begun ; but first explains why our Lord saw fit to choose Galilee, and not Judea, his birth-place, which seemed the more natural home of the Messiah, for the principal scene of his labours. “ Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee. For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country.” Judea was his own country, compared with despised Galilee, and Nazareth, compared with Capernaum and the rest of the province. He began his ministry, then, in Judea, but the envy of the Pharisees soon compelled him to return to Galilee. In Galilee he opened his public message in the synagogue of Nazareth, but their pride and passion made him soon transfer it to Capernaum. The apostle, by this new application of our Lord's own saying, not only implies the fact that his birth-place was Bethlehem in Judea, but gives the secret key, which explains the usual scene of his ministry, and the rare and occasional nature of those visits to Jerusalem, which occupy the chief part of his own gospel. In the same spirit, and clearly with the same meaning, after noticing that the Passover was at hand, when the miracle of the loaves took place, he continues his narrative. “ After these things Jesus walked in Galilee (περιπατει) for he did not choose to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill him.” It is thus indirectly taught us that eighteen months, or one half the whole time of his ministry, were passed without a single visit to Jerusalem. And hence, to mark the succession of events, and

preserve the connexion with the other gospels, one event in Galilee is recorded during this long interval, the miracle of the five thousand, which took place a little before the third Passover, and at a time when the men of Capernaum began to rival the unbelief of the dwellers in Jerusalem.

The historical accuracy of the gospel is equally apparent, in its familiar allusions to the various localities of Palestine, and the different scenes of our Lord's ministry. The Evangelist who soars highest in the contemplation of heavenly truth, is at home in the most minute details of local geography. We are told here, that Philip was of Bethsaida, from the city of Andrew and Peter, which appears to be a double notice that he was an actual resident at Bethsaida, but a native, or former inhabitant, of Capernaum. We have a passing hint, in the words of Nathanael, of the local discredit which attached to Nazareth amongst the neighbour towns. At the close of the gospel, Nathanael is said to be of Cana in Galilee, and here in its opening, the miracle at Cana is the next event after Nathanael's call to be a disciple. We are told that the first message to John was at Bethabara, beyond Jordan, where he was then baptizing; and that, later in the season, when the summer drought might have begun, "he was baptizing at Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there." The well of Jacob is placed at Sychar in Samaria, "near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph." The pool of Bethesda has its locality defined, and the number of its porches. The mountain, on the east of the sea of Tiberias, and the place of Capernaum on the opposite side, are joined with an intimation of the breadth of the lake, and the situation of Tiberias also on the western coast. The mount of Olives, the nightly resort of Jesus, the pool of Siloam, the porch of Solomon, the distance of Bethany, fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem, the position of Ephraim, on the edge of the wilderness, a description implying local knowledge of the region to the south of Samaria, the brook Cedron, the garden of Gethsemane, the home of Annas, and the palace of Caiaphas, the hall of Judg-

ment, the pavement, called Gabbatha, and the place of Crucifixion, called in Hebrew Golgotha, are all alluded to in the course of the history; and indicate a familiar knowledge on the part of the writer, which does not even suspect that the ignorance of readers might require any fuller explanation. When we compare the notices of place in St. Luke, the difference is very striking, and confirms the Apostolic origin of the fourth gospel.

The various allusions to the Apostles have the same air of perfect knowledge and unconscious truth. Their choice, and the list of their names, are nowhere recorded, as in the three other gospels; but the fact that twelve disciples were chosen, and the names of the greater portion, are assumed to be familiarly known. They are first mentioned by an indirect allusion, vi. 67—71. "Then said Jesus to the Twelve, Will ye also go away? Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve? and one of you is a devil. He spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for he it was that was about to betray him, being one of the twelve."

This, however, is only one out of many such marks of familiar knowledge. In this gospel only we find it mentioned, that Andrew first introduced Simon Peter to Jesus, and that Nathanael or Bartholomew was introduced by Philip; that the latter Apostle lived at Bethsaida, and Nathanael at Cana; that our Saviour questioned Philip, before the miracle of the loaves, and Philip and Andrew separately replied to his inquiry; that the name of Iscariot's father was Simon; that Thomas the Apostle was also surnamed Didymus, with his desponding words to his fellow-disciples, before their return to Bethany; that the Greeks at the last Passover applied to Philip, and Philip to Andrew, and both of them to Jesus; that St. John, at the last supper, leaned on the bosom of the Lord, and Simon Peter applied to him, privately, to learn the name of the traitor; that Judas carried the bag, in which the money of their necessary expenses was contained;

that Simon Peter, Thomas, Philip, and Judas, the brother of James, took part successively in the discourse at the last supper ; that Malchus was the name of the servant, whose ear Peter cut off ; that St. John was known to the high-priest, and that Peter and John alone followed to the high-priest's palace ; that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was committed to the charge of St. John, as they stood gazing on the cross ; that Mary Magdalene brought the first tidings of the stone being rolled away, to Peter and John, and that they ran together to the sepulchre, and saw that the body had disappeared ; that Thomas was absent on the evening of the resurrection, and, afterwards, on the Lord's day that followed, had his unbelief rebuked by a second appearance of Jesus, and uttered a full confession of His Divine glory. Last of all, that seven disciples were present, after the resurrection, at a second miraculous draught of fishes, and a third appearance of Jesus by the sea of Galilee ; that Peter then received a thrice repeated commission, to feed the sheep of Christ, and a prediction of his own martyrdom ; and St. John a mysterious promise of being spared much longer from death, until some special manifestation of his risen Lord in his glory. The details concerning the Apostles, in all the three other Evangelists, are hardly so numerous as in this one gospel alone.

This gospel, again, has frequent notices of number, time, and place, which give a more striking air of reality to the narrative. At the very opening, the events of six days are recorded in succession. On the first, the message of the Pharisees is sent to the Baptist ; on the next, he bears public witness to the character of Jesus as the Son of God ; on the third, he repeats his testimony in the presence of Andrew and John, who thereupon follow Jesus. On the fourth, he finds Philip, and converses with Nathanael, while setting out to Galilee. One day is spent in the journey, and on the third day from the one last mentioned there is the marriage at Cana. It was the tenth hour, on the third of these six days, when the two disciples first abode with Jesus—as if the Evangelist wished to fix the very moment, the

day and the hour, which began his eventful intercourse with the Lord of glory. There were six waterpots at the wedding, and each of them held two or three measures. The temple had been forty-six years in building, under the direction of Herod and his successors. It was the sixth hour when Jesus sat on the well of Jacob. The woman had had five husbands, besides the man with whom she was actually living. The stay of Jesus at Sychar lasted two days. It was at the seventh hour, that the fever was cured, and this was the second of the miracles of Jesus. The pool of Bethesda had five porches, and the man who lay there had been afflicted thirty-eight years. It was a sabbath on which he was cured. There were just five barley loaves and two small fishes, and twelve baskets were filled with the fragments. The disciples had rowed twenty-five or thirty furlongs, when Jesus overtook them, walking on the sea. The boats in which the people crossed the next day, came from Tiberias, and not to the very place of the miracle, but somewhere near it. It was at the middle of the feast of tabernacles, that Jesus went into the temple, and there taught; and on the last, the great day of the feast, that he made the striking appeal to the whole people, and the promise to all believers. The woman taken in adultery was brought to him early in the morning, and Jesus stooped down, and wrote on the ground, before his answer to her accusers. The eyes of the blind man were anointed with spittle and clay, before he was sent to wash in the pool of Saloam. At the feast of Dedication, Jesus walked in the temple, in the porch of Solomon. After hearing of the illness of Lazarus, he abode two days where he was, and on his arrival at Bethany, the body had been four days in the grave. Bethany was fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem. The arrival there of Jesus was six days before the Passover. The ointment, with which Mary anointed Jesus, was valued at three hundred denarii. It was night, when Judas went out at the Paschal supper, and it was early, or before day-break, when Jesus was first brought before Pilate. It was the day of the preparation, about the sixth hour, when Pilate brought him

out to the Jews, with the words, "Behold your King." The garments were divided into four parts, one to each soldier. The spices which Nicodemus brought, were "a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds in weight." The second appearance to the eleven disciples was eight days after the first, and each of them in the evening. There were seven disciples present at the third appearance by the sea of Tiberias. The ship was about two hundred cubits from the land, when the draught was made, and the net enclosed one hundred and fifty-three great fishes. In all these minute particulars, we have the pen of one "who had companied with Jesus, all the time that he went out and came in among" his disciples, from the baptism of John until the day that he was taken up into heaven.

Another feature of the whole narrative is its relation, as a supplement, to passages in the other gospels. Events are not repeated, but simply alluded to, and fresh particulars indirectly supplied. No mention is found of the Nativity or miraculous Conception. Yet we read, more than once, of Mary, the mother of Jesus; while Joseph is spoken of as his father in popular esteem; but the Evangelist himself forbears that title, which, on the contrary, he applies directly and exclusively to God. "Make not my Father's house a house of merchandize." "My Father worketh hitherto, and I also work." His birth at Bethlehem is equally implied, not only by the objection of the Jews, vii. 41, 42, but by the Evangelist styling Judea "the own country" of Jesus, iv. 44. No mention is made of his baptism, but we have the Baptist himself, bearing witness to the descent of the Spirit, which he saw at that time, and echoing the voice which proclaimed Jesus to be the beloved Son of God. His temptation is not recorded; but we see Jesus returning by way of Bethabara to Galilee, as if from the wilderness. No list is given of the twelve apostles; but we have the first introduction of Andrew and Peter, James and John, Philip and Nathanael, to their Lord, in the very order in which their pairs of names are placed in the other gospels. The term of reproach, Naza-

rene, is not mentioned, but its origin is seen in the question of Nathanael—"Can any good thing come out of Nazareth." The actual imposition of the name Cephias or Peter, is not given at the ordination of the twelve, nor the confession which occasioned its repetition, but it appears as a predicted name on the first day when they met. "Thou shalt be called Cephias, which is by interpretation, Peter." Only eight are recorded, out of all the numerous miracles of Jesus, and of these only two appear in the other gospels; but the first and second of all which he wrought are carefully given, before he began his public ministry in Galilee. The cleansing of the temple at the last Passover is not recorded; but a precisely similar event at the first Passover, three years earlier. We have no account of the charge made by the false witnesses, Mark xiv. 58, but meet, here only, with the saying which clearly gave birth to the accusation—"Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." We have no direct mention of John's imprisonment, which preceded the ministry in Galilee; but are told that, while our Lord was in Judea, John was also baptizing, and was not yet cast into prison; which plainly implies that he was imprisoned very soon after. We have no direct introduction of the parable of the harvest field, as in St. Matthew and St. Mark, but only the passing statement, "Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest." We have neither, as in St. Matthew, a brief mention of his removal from Nazareth to Capernaum, nor an account, as in St. Luke, of his rejection by the Nazarenes; since the narrative of St. John leaves him at Cana. But we have an allusion to the saying of our Lord on that very occasion in the synagogue of Nazareth, that "no prophet is accepted in his own country;" and the miracle wrought at Capernaum, while Jesus was still at Cana, is expressly placed the first in order, after the one wrought at the marriage feast; so that its previous occurrence will account for the request of the Nazarenes. The passing through the corn fields, just after the second Passover, and the repeated complaints of Sabbath-breaking then

brought against Jesus, do not appear; but we have the miracle at the pool of Bethesda, in Jerusalem, during the feast itself, and the statement that it formed the date of a constant and malicious persecution from the rulers of the Jews. There is no formal and direct account of the deep interest awakened by the appearance of the Baptist, and the profound and universal impression made upon the Jews; but we have the passing statement, which includes the whole history in one figurative sentence. "He was a burning and a shining light, and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." We have only two or three references to the prophets, to confirm the claims of Jesus; but we find the comprehensive declaration—"Search the Scriptures, for it is they which testify of me," "Had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me." The ascension of our Lord is not reported in its place, but it is clearly intimated, both in the words to the Capernaïtes—"What if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" and in the message to Mary Magdalene—"I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." The appointment of the Lord's Supper is not mentioned; but the passage vi. 51—58, is clearly alluded to in the very words of the institution in the other gospels. The confession of Peter on the way to Cæsarea is not given; but we have a similar confession, still earlier, after the miracle of the loaves, and the discourse at Capernaum. No mention is found of the general expectation, before the final entrance to Jerusalem, that the kingdom of God, a temporal kingdom of Messiah, would immediately appear; but we are told that the multitudes, after being fed with the loaves in the wilderness, had intended to come by force, and make him king. We have no mention, as in St. Luke, of his resort to the Mount of Olives by night during Passion-week, but we find it named in the previous visit at the Feast of Tabernacles. The blasphemous charges against our Lord, that he was gluttonous and a winebibber, and that he cast out devils by Beelzebub, do not meet us here in the same form. But we find another, couched in the same spirit—

“Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hath a devil?” and a further allusion by our Lord himself to his mention of this very charge in the Apostolic commission. Matt. x. 24. “Remember the word that I said unto you—“The servant is not greater than his Lord.” John xv. 20. The incidents in St. Mark, where spittle was used in healing the deaf man in Decapolis, and the blind man at Bethsaida, do not appear, but the very same circumstance is here recorded, in the cure of the man who had been blind from his birth. The language in which our Lord announces his own purpose to raise Lazarus exactly answers to the phrase, in the three other gospels, before the resurrection of the ruler’s daughter—“The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.” “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go to raise him out of sleep.” The retirement to Ephraim, as shewn before, links itself with the route, given by St. Luke, of the last public journey, preceded by a passage through Samaria; and the six days’ interval from the arrival at Bethany to the crucifixion tallies completely with the accounts in the other gospels. The washing of the disciples’ feet explains the whole force of that remark by which the dispute at the last supper, as St. Luke informs us, was stilled. “Whether is greater, he that serveth, or he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.” The answer of Jesus to Peter in the garden, alludes to the words uttered in his hour of agony, of which St. John has no record. “O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.” And, last of all, the miraculous draught after the resurrection resembles closely the earlier miracle in St. Luke; while all the features of contrast between them have a deep spiritual significance, which confirms their reality, as two successive works of Divine power, and parables of the blessing about to rest on the labours of the Apostles, when they should enter fully on their great office, as the fishers of men. The scene where it occurred, by the sea of Tiberias, is explained by the charge to the disciples in St. Matthew, that they should return into Galilee. The appearance came unex-

pectedly upon the seven disciples, while they were waiting for the larger gathering of their brethren; and it was followed by that fullest and most conspicuous manifestation, which our Lord had promised before his death, when five hundred brethren were present at once, on the mountain that Jesus had appointed, to receive a solemn commission from their risen Lord, before He ascended to the Father.

Thus, with every step we take in the close examination of these Divine histories, new signs of truth and wisdom come forth perpetually to our view. If it was true of our blessed Lord, that "never man spake like this man," the remark may be extended to these sacred memoirs of his life, that never was history written before, like these histories. So simple in style, yet so profound; so unadorned in their heavenly beauty; so consistent and harmonious, even to repetition, in their grand outlines, and so rich in their multiplied diversities; they contain an evidence of truth and reality, which defies all the vain efforts of unbelieving minds. They are a treasury of wisdom and grace, that is able to supply the deepest wants, and remedy the most grievous miseries, of a fallen world. Like the heavenly cherubim, each has its own peculiar character, and reveals a separate aspect in the love of Christ; but they all unite, as with a voice of thunder, in uttering the same invitation to sinners—"Come and see the grace and condescension of the Man of sorrows. Come and see the glory of the Son of God." Every humble heart will respond to their invitation, and will say, like the Samaritans of old—"We have seen Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

THE END.

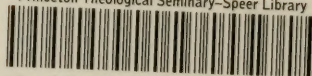
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